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No. 48

THE LOVE-LIFE OF BYRON CALDWELL SMITH

THE LOVE-LIFE OF BYRON CALDWELL SMITH

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

A. I. TOBIN

New York

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1930

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Demand for this book leads to this edition. In a former edition, published by The Macmillan Company in 1919, under the title *The Professor's Love-Life, Letters of Ronsby Maldclewith,* names of people and places were changed to shield the living from publicity.

However, Frank Harris' misrepresentations of Professor Smith's character in his *My Life and Loves,* and the rebutting *Lies and Libels of Frank Harris* by Kate Stephens, lead afresh to demands for these letters. We are glad to give them to the world with dates and names of places and people restored to the original form. In themselves they constitute an overwhelming refutation of the Harris charges.

In this new edition we have kept the numbering of the pages the same as in the Macmillan edition above mentioned, and therefore all references in Miss Stephens' *Lies and Libels of Frank Harris* to the pages of the former edition — that is, to *The Professor's Love-Life* — are severally exact for this new edition, THE LOVE-LIFE OF BYRON CALDWELL SMITH.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

INTRODUCTION

These letters giving THE LOVE-LIFE OF BYRON CALDWELL SMITH are now published in their original form, just as they were written by Byron Smith to Kate Stephens. Another edition, *The Professor's Love-Life,* which contained the sub-title *Letters of Ronsby Maldclewith* (Ronsby Maldclewith being an anagram of the name *Byron Caldwell Smith*), was published by The Macmillan Company in 1919. In the first edition, Mrs. Margaret Caldwell Smith, mother of Byron, and Miss Kate Stephens, the *Katherine* of these letters, motivated by native reserve and delicacy of feeling, varied the names of people and towns. But now, Miss Stephens, who believes her contact with the world is about over, has been persuaded to permit publication of these letters with their real names and places.

To understand all the better the significance of this book, it is necessary for the reader to form a mental picture of these lovers which is here presented in sketch form.

Byron Caldwell Smith was born on the 28th

of August, 1849, at Island Creek, Ohio. His father, George P. Smith, whose indefatigable activities took him through many experiences and occupations, was Colonel of the 69th Illinois Regiment during the Civil War. He came of Palatinate German stock. The mother of Byron was Margaret Caldwell, of the lineage of one of the Caldwell brothers who, many years ago, issued from North Ireland and gave this country several stirring descendants, among whom were John Caldwell Calhoun, Vice-President of the United States between 1825 and 1832, and the Baltimore beauty, Elizabeth Patterson who married Jerome Bonaparte.

Margaret Caldwell lived on a farm near Steubenville, Ohio. It was here she met her husband. They married in 1848 and dwelt on a farm adjoining her parents'. In those days women had few opportunities for schooling, but Mrs. Smith possessed a keenness of mind at times dazzling. Bare, remorseless logic and unveiled outspokenness characterized her. She could not but be conscious of her powers, which resulted in a dominating carriage.

To trace the salient characteristics of Byron is not difficult. His physical appearance, his warmth, his sympathetic heart came from his father, while the keenness of his intellect, to-

gether with his poetic imagery, were transmitted to him from his mother.

The continual migrations of his father, whose health shattered by war, led him from state to state in his quest for a friendly climate, fixed the scenes of Byron's childhood and his schooling. His instruction was such as towns like Mason, Dwight and Danville in Illinois, afforded, with the exception of four months at a Roman Catholic school at Wheeling, Virginia. Byron was also for a time a student at Illinois College, Jacksonville.

In September, 1868, he went to Europe to carry forward the studies he had planned for the next six years. The following four years, often working eighteen hours a day, he spent in Heidelberg, Berlin, Munich, Vienna and Athens. In May, 1872, he returned to his parents in Humboldt, Kansas, shortening his studies abroad by two years because of the prostration of his mother from the death of her only daughter.

In the fall of the year he came back to America, he became instructor of Greek at the University of Kansas. The following year, at the age of twenty-four, he was made Professor of Greek Language and Literature at the University, the first to serve in that chair, and the youngest and most brilliant member of the faculty.

In appearance Byron was tall and lithe like his father. His eyes were large, dark-brown and lustrous, set far apart under an overhanging brow. His skin was slightly olive-tinted. The hair and side-whiskers which he wore with shaven, dimpled chin, were soft and chestnut-brown tinged with auburn. Years later, Kate Stephens carried the description a bit further and said that when he stood in the sunlight, his hair took on a golden light.

The mouth was of the sensitive type with full lips, while the nose was straight without any hesitating lines, denoting at once the directive and alert force of the man. But it was the eyes particularly, that grew on one; soft, tender, velvety eyes; eyes which were Christlike in their luminosity, and from which emanated kindness and sympathetic understanding.

In all he was a handsome youth at whom one could not resist a second look as he walked through the streets submerged in his surging thoughts. . . .

In development of thought, Byron Smith was affected to a large extent, by the logics and philosophies of Spinoza and Hegel, and frankly avowed himself a pantheist at a time when such thoughts were looked upon with distrust. His views on religion markedly deviated

from those which predominated at the time. Life to him was the realization and understanding of what this world consists . . . to recognize new difficulties, new sorrows, new limitations, and to rise above them is the law of growth and of life.

In the fall of 1874, attacks of renal neuralgia led him to ask leave of absence from his post at the University. He went to Philadelphia to seek the advice of world-known physicians. After a few months of semi-invalidism, he became so far restored that he accepted an invitation to join the editorial staff of *The Press*, a Philadelphia newspaper then in its heyday. But pneumonia, which later developed into consumption, cut off this venture. He left for his home in Humboldt, Kansas, and later, for the arid air of Colorado, where he died in the arms of his mother on the 4th of May, 1877, in his twenty-seventh year. His body was taken to Humboldt and there buried in the family plot near his sister. His sole monument for many years was a book of letters written when he was studying abroad and published under the title, *A Young Scholar's Letters*.

Byron Smith possessed a mind of great reasoning power, easily grasping and penetrating the subtlest speculations of philosophic abstractions towards which he always sought

the support of scientific induction. He also possessed in high degree that peculiar force of character which marks the natural born leader and teacher of men. No wonder that a friend of his, Wilberforce Wells, a fellow-student in Germany, wrote a sonnet each year commemorating the passing of this unfledged genius. One tribute I quote below:

IN MEMORIAM
BYRON C. SMITH

Soul of my friend; upon a lonely strand
I give my greeting to the winds for thee;
They flutter out above the darkling sea.
O, if they reach thee, wave a shadowy hand
Across some silver cloud-rift of my sleep!
The thin cape's covered end I sit before
And list if haply from thy distant shore
A whisper sigh low down along the deep.
How worthless, by the gold of thy great heart,
The dross of many another friendship cold!
To be with memories of our love of old
I hide beneath this storm-scarred cliff apart;
And oft my spirit worships in the night
Before the world-soul hid by nature's veils from sight.

Kate Stephens was born in Moravia, New York, the 27th of February, 1853. Her father, Nelson Timothy Stephens, a lawyer with

a lucrative practice, locked the doors of his office when, in 1861, Lincoln first sent out a call for help. Within a few weeks he enlisted and took to Washington his Company of Volunteers. A year or so after, broken with tuberculosis, a result of field-service, he went south seeking a cure. Finding the south hostile to the cultural traditions of his family, he decided to go northwards, on horse-back. By his doctor's orders, he spent whole days in the saddle. Finally he entered Kansas City from whose heights he looked over the fat lands of Kansas, rolling westward. In this state he decided to buy land and build his home, and three years later, in 1868, he brought his family from Hartford, Connecticut, to a farm of about two hundred and thirty acres skirting the city of Lawrence, on the north.

In Lawrence, Kate entered a preparatory school, and in 1871 the University of Kansas, from which she graduated in 1875. It was at the University, in advanced classes of Greek in which she was at times the only pupil, that she first met Professor Smith. Byron fell in love with his pupil, and soon a romance developed which was destined to become an outstanding love-story in American Letters — the most beautiful — and saddest.

At the time Kate met Byron she was about

nineteen years of age and of good height. Her face was oval with large grey-green eyes set far apart, and a head topped off with a crown of ash-brown hair. Frank Harris who saw her at the University at this time, referred to her, many years later, as "the slim girl with the heavy-lidded eyes." Her firm lips explained the unusual determination of the girl who was fated to go through life alone because of the death of the man she loved and to whom she became engaged while still his pupil.

Kate Stephens is still amongst the living. To-day, were one to meet this amiable old lady, he would observe a woman whose very existence is an eloquent tale of devotion. He would notice a face that must bear little resemblance to that of "the slim girl with the heavy-lidded eyes," save the firm lips and set jaw which have become accentuated by the determination to keep aloft the sublime consciousness of her lost lover. He would also notice that the hair is now white, silvery white, and worn bobbed, thrown back, outlining in sharp relief the pallid, deeply-furrowed features, and shining eyes.

Kate Stephens is reticent — very much so. But I have met her innumerable times and have

spent many hours in her company, talking the very stars from the heavens. Bit by bit I managed to get her story, though I am still lacking a few chapters.

To this day, more then fifty years later, she has not gotten over her bereavement. Her one relief, for she has spent these years a recluse, has been in work, and re-living those months of almost daily association with her lover.

At one time she recalled walks she and Byron, hand in hand, took through her father's woods and fields, and their drives over beautiful country roads up to and beyond a lake, a segment of the Kaw River, round whose margins frogs sang in May and June, and on whose surface lily chinquapins nodded and rustled their leaves in September. On one of these afternoons, Byron repeated to her a poem he had written when a student in Europe. Kate changed a word here and there, and added the last verse lending the whole a new significance. I reproduce the poem here for its rhythmic beauty, and for the qualities it possesses as a remarkably fine poem begun in Heidelberg, we must remember, by a student boy in his teens, and completed years later by him and the lady of his heart in the broad spaces of the Kansas open.

AD VIVOS

I, once a man, now safe in dust and slumber,
  Did watch, as thou, the days die one by one,
And thought — nor ceased to think — how few
    their number,
    Till they were gone —
    Till they were done.

As thou dost look, I looked with awe and yearning
  To skies of stars, to skies filled full of suns,
For trace of gods; and midst all lights there burning
    I found but one —
    Found only One.

Then turned I earthward, heart aflame with longing,
  To men and wives, to folk of joy and dole,
And found in mine own kind, stars light outshining,
    — Godlike with love
    And part of One —
    The human soul —
    The moral soul —
    The selfless soul.

In talking to her of the letters of this volume, when I would mention a particular letter and quote a phrase or sentence, she would more likely quote the next line. These letters

had sunk deep in her memory. It is interesting to note that no eyes but hers and Mrs. Margaret Caldwell Smith's ever looked upon the originals. Kate kept them with her until about twelve years ago, when one afternoon, death seeming to draw near, she laid the worn and yellowed sheets, with a box of matches, in the case of a portable typewriter, and took them to a grassy point projecting under the Palisades, into the Hudson, and there burned the letters one by one. Her own letters to Byron she had burned a few years before. What her thoughts were at these times, she has not revealed to me, but we should have little difficulty divining. . . .

For the first year after Byron's death, Kate was prostrate with grief. At this point, it should be mentioned that when Professor Smith obtained leave of absence from the University of Kansas, he left in charge of his chair a man claiming to hail from Princeton, whom he had known in student life in Berlin and Athens, and whose name was D. B. English. This man agreed to take charge of and guard Professor Smith's interests until his return. But the glory of the post went to English's head, and to hold the professorship permanently, he set going false rumors about Professor Smith; one in particular, in which he implied that while Smith was in Athens he

had illicit relations with a Greek girl. The result of all this was that Professor Smith, while in Philadelphia seeking his cure, was peremptorily dismissed from the University in the summer of 1875. But the thief was not long with his booty. Two years later, this English was put out of office as a fraud when it was discovered that he was not the graduate and possessor of the doctor's degree in philosophy that he had claimed.

In 1878 Kate Stephens became assistant in the department of Greek and Latin at the University of Kansas. A year later she was made full professor. This chair she held for the next six years.

In 1885, soon after her father's death, she was asked to resign. The Chancellor of the University at the time, made no bones of saying in public that he wanted a male professor in the Greek Chair; and in other ways he antagonized Miss Stephens. So long as her father, a man of influence and power lived, she was safe to find solace in her work. But the moment Judge Stephens died the opportunity came for the Chancellor and his clique in the Board of Regents. For days she paid no attention to the request for her resignation. The Chancellor then ordered his secretary personally to put in her hands a formal notification that her salary would cease on a certain

date, and the chair of Greek would then be vacant. So was Kate Stephens dismissed from a post that had been to her a vale of forgetfulness.

Three terrible calamities in her life in a comparatively short period — the death of her lover; the loss of her father to whom she was devotedly attached; and the loss of a position which meant the anodyne of unceasing labor and opportunity to carry on the work of Byron Smith. . . .

She moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts. A little later, the property of her mother and herself, because of unfortunate management, became almost a total loss. Kate was then left with little capital to face the world.

In 1895 she took up her residence in New York City, which has been her home ever since. She earned her livelihood as an editor for the Harper house, The Macmillan Company and other publishers. "I trod grapes laboring in the heavy tasks of a book-editor," she said. "My pleasures were in writing, particularly *The Greek Spirit, Workfellows in Social Progression, A Woman's Heart, Life at Laurel Town.*" By her books she would like her life-work to be judged — by her books in toto, and the human helpfulness she has endeavored to exercise.

I remember in particular one late afternoon

in her little studio flat in Chelsea Village. We were discussing celibacy. I asked her why she had not married in all these years. She looked at me for a moment and said in her clear, hesitating voice:

"On several occasions — in moments of weakness — I was about to accept a proposal of marriage. But always — his face would appear before me — and I could not," staring all the while across the room as she talked.

On another occasion I asked her what her thoughts were pertaining to life.

"I am glad you asked me this question," she answered; "if you don't mind, I'll write it out and send it to you." I reproduce here what I received from her, a few days later:

"We grope as the blinded Elymas groped when 'a mist and a darkness' fell upon him, and 'he went about seeking some one to lead him by the hand.' We endeavor to elucidate the moral order of the world. There *is* a moral order. Else why are we here. *Cogito, ergo sum.* We did not evolve through immoral disorder. Fluent energy is always driving to realize itself. God is the immanent cause of the totality of the world. Unconscious God is pushing to conscious God. Seeking truth we are never done — the cultivation of humble exactness — aim at truth

in word and deed always — such pride in one's own integrity that one scorns a lie as a filthy thing. 'Great is truth and mighty above all things.'

"Then there is beauty to worship. 'To die and no longer see these beautiful things!' I say to myself when I think how it shall be in time when I am dead. I never tire of watching the sky — clouds floating; sun, moon and stars rising over chimney-tops; stained gold and roseate risings and settings. And the doves in the broad space over there! Boys keep pigeons in housetop coops and let them out afternoons, and they wheel, wheel scores of times, and the sun strikes their feathers and turns them to black birds, white birds, birds of gold — no where, in all literature, so delightful an allusion to this characteristic wheeling of flocks of pigeons as Froissart's, when one day, perhaps about the year 1390, he listened to tales for his *Chronicles*.

"Intellectual curiosity behind the eyes, and with eyes wide open I have gone through life. And worked, worked. Of all boons to us humans, labor is greatest. Through labor we have risen to to-day's intelligence — intelligence to ask 'Is it true?' 'Is it beautiful?' 'Is it honest and righteous?' These are the questions. These are the holy things. Every day we discover this afresh, if we have the

right sort of hearts in us and the right sort of heads on our shoulders.

"Memories as virid as a June meadow, sunlit, also memories plangorous, and books, old books to re-read, new books to work out — these are always with me.

"Books I have written are my children, often of much longer gestation than a child of the flesh, and, I am confident, born into the world with greater travail.

The skies I worship do not stoop to take me;
The songs I sing go forth — but echo never;
My high resolves with mean results forsake me; —
And still I sing, and worship, and endeavor."

A little while later I asked her if she were not afraid living a solitary in complete seclusion; that something might happen to her during the night.

"Oh, well," she answered smiling, "if the superintendent sees the milk-bottle and morning paper outside my door, he'll break in."

Another time she said to me: "I never dreamed I'd live so long! The summons seems late in coming, doesn't it? But I've been getting my house in order. In those boxes," pointing to an array against the wall, "everything is ready to be sent to the places designated in my will. I don't want to trouble

my executor, you know. Everything is arranged," she told me with a calmness that chilled me.

The letters of this volume tell a story which is ineffable in its qualities — pathetic-sad — and beautiful. Abelard's love for Heloise is easily rivaled by these letters which are woven throughout with poignant grief, "like pain dipped in honey." They tell a story of a transcendent love of measureless devotion, and are nothing less than an organ of the soul. . . . The lyrical temperament and the natural gift of expression are instinctive. Think of an expression like, "Let my love be something to you, as yours carries me over the gulf of darkness beneath me to a region where there is no measure of days' beginning and end, but only a glorious sense of perfect life." Or, "Our flesh, our individuality, is but a veil of the Eternal and Infinite Life, and Love burns through this veil." Or this: "Your short notes at long intervals touch me, darling Katherine, like a dying sound further and further withdrawing from my hearing." Or another: "To live is to be with you. That is the last great unsubmerged highland of my life's desires."

The passing of the years spent in illness and heartaches brought no fulfillment of this love.

To the very end of his life, Byron was absorbed by this one thought.

"My dreams of you grow more and more vivid, and I have lived through many a lovely season by your side absorbed in the tenderest and noblest delights of life.

"But my hand sinks and my feeble hours are few.

"God be with you, Light and Life."

Such words as these one cannot soon forget, for they burn into the hearts of the living.

A. I. Tobin.

Brooklyn, New York.
December, 1929.

I

LETTERS SENT FROM DENVER, LAWRENCE AND HUMBOLDT IN THE SUMMER OF 1874

THE LOVE-LIFE OF BYRON CALDWELL SMITH

DENVER
28 JUNE

Dearest Katherine

I shall not attempt to describe my disappointment in not finding a letter from you here. All the way, and by that I mean all the time I was in coming, the sweetest thing at the end of my journey was not the mountain air, or the cool kisses of the nymph Hygeia in some shadowy cañon, but a small folded sheet with words of more than health. So great is my impatience.

Denver is a bright place — showy equipages, open-handed people, and everyone in confederacy to praise Colorado. Unhappy he who finds fault with anything, from the stifling sand, which you are given to understand is at least clean dirt, to the

intelligence of people declared to be the *élite* of the Union. But more of this when I know more.

To-morrow we start for Idaho Springs and, after a week or so of small excursions, fit out for the Parks and to cross the range. Until then I shall expect your letter. Oh, write, write. I am perishing to see on paper the words — I love you. When your lips breathed them they seemed mere echo of my own confession. I could not realize they came from your very heart. Every day I feel gladder and stronger as the consciousness of a great passion fills me.

It is a great life-passion, not a golden vagary, a self-created illusion, a spring-dream full of the flutter of doves' wings — although heaven knows you have enough of those gifts which Paris says no mortal taketh, enough to enchain a score of men without ever giving a single one glimpse of your true heart.

Do you think I do not understand that heart's yearnings? — that I love just that

willowy form and grace of motion, that soft conscious face, that eager, splendid spirit? Any of these is enough to nourish a life-long dream of joy, and I love them all, *satis superque*. My flesh yearns and heart aches to think how far away they are. But most of all I love that deep, subtle and somewhat perverse heart that loves me.

For me life has but one solution — it must be filled with Katherine. If I have loved Katherine with all my heart and strength there is nothing more my soul will seek in all the ages. God has given me this escape from death: it is my return to him.

I stop writing without having said — oh, ever so little of what I wish to say. Farewell, "sweetest thing in mortal eyes." Write me often, often.

DENVER
19 JULY

Yesterday I returned from a trip to Middle Park where for days I had been victim of most distracting moods. Nature is nowhere more glorious. But constantly, in reveries

of joyous communion with her, I was startled by a gnawing pain — than the joy as much deeper and more intense as the heart's world is deeper than the eye's.

I had expected a letter from you before leaving Denver on our first tour. After nine days' absence we came back and — no letter even then. How my heart sank! How many dark thoughts rose! I can not put on paper what I dimly feared. The last two months began to grow visionary — like a dream. The old hard reality of renunciation began to settle round their memories.

We went off again, this time to Middle Park, to be gone nine or ten days, and during all that time how could I enjoy the tranquil beauty of the heights with that incubus of fear upon my spirit?

On our return I came over the range alone by a new route, while the others travelled by the Pass through which we entered. It was a hundred-mile ride over tremendous mountains.

With my blankets, wallet, cup, revolver

and poncho I rode three days through those vast solitudes, often above snow-line, up where pines cease to grow, still higher beyond the grass and magical freshness of flowers to where a faint moss clings over the shattered acres-of-rock — where nothing broke the awful silence but the mule's laborious breathing, and nothing living was to be seen save the grey mountain rat and the yellow-winged bumble-bee.

From these heights the plains shone far away to the east, as vast and blue as the ocean, and their alkali ridges gleamed through the haze like breaker-crests upon a distant sea.

But ever, all about, was the vast wilderness of mountains, wrinkles of our ancient giant-earth.

Then down interminable slopes of pine forest, silent and dark, down along the course of a mountain torrent now crystal clear, now foaming, down, down with the blue sky and fleecy July clouds gleaming through the feathery pines, and so like the azure, snow-

mottled peaks that sky and cloud and snow-decked mountain sometimes seemed one! A night alone in one of those passes! But I must tell you of this later.

Imagine, sweet Katherine, the anxiety and trembling with which I asked if I had letters! And my misery when I heard there were none! But I grasped at a straw. Perhaps inquiries had not included my mail. I rushed off to the post. And my joy on receiving a letter with New York illy legible on the back!

The superscription was a mystery — I could not tell what it promised. It was a queer compound of English and German script. But it was your letter within, dear heart, my first love letter, and sweeter to me than the subtlest love-lyric Sappho ever penned in Aeolic gold.

You had fears of my constancy! Heavens! How could I be false to a feeling I could not stifle in my despair! — now, when melting airs and warmth of hope and assurance feed it?

You regret the pain you caused? If you were to go on in your course you might leave many a wreck behind. One poor fellow's heart I know would swell the list. But it is in your power to weigh up the pain by tenfold happiness. Even those who love you would not undo what is done.

I will write Bancroft, tell him I mastered my feeling because I believed it my duty, and he can not bear me ill that, after you broke your engagement with him I hopelessly disclosed my love. If he will not receive what I say I shall at least have done right. He would never have shown me the regard I so long preserved toward him.

In the mountains I have gained in health and hope. Katherine, I do not want to impose any sorrow on your sweet life, dearer to me far than my own; but the secret of life is not in fair days and untroubled skies. It is to love with all one's soul what is pure, what is high, what is eternal — even if it appear in decaying form. I hope our life may be full of cheerful human joys. But whatever our

fortune it shall not want on my part that devotion which is its own reward.

I can not write of things which even impassioned breath can not utter. Autumn is coming with its days of gold, its days of reverie and of you — oh, such delightful hours that my heart burns within me at the anticipation.

Do not forget my impatience, dearest, to hear from you when I can not hear you.

LAWRENCE
26 JULY

After writing you from Denver I come back to Lawrence better and browner than for many a day. Our party lacked enthusiasm. A few weeks roughing it and they preferred a Christian bed to all the pagan magnificence of The Garden of the Gods.

I wait for your return, oh, how impatiently! I grow morbidly sensitive about things and sometimes regret having betrayed

so much feeling to you — lest I seem to force a return rather from your compassion than real regard.

You see, dear Katherine, shadows are on the great tide of new life that surges in my heart. My love does not rest yet in placid expanse mirroring the majesty and beauty of the world. Fear houses in its depths where ought to glide only a train of dreams. You will have to give me confidence who have so long taught me despair.

But hasten, oh sweet! The days and nights are long and wearisome. At times I feel like breaking away from this suspense, this long torture of restraint, and seeking a life of adventure and toil in distant lands. What would it matter then if I were sick or died? There would be no heart-ache. Now for two years what have I not suffered! Only your sweet voice and soothing presence can banish these painful thoughts.

You do not write often. This is my third letter and I have but one of yours.

I am at the house of the reverend rector of Saint Infidelius.

To my heart's heart.

HUMBOLDT
13 AUGUST

It was not without his usual profundity that the great poet put in one category the lunatic and the lover. Now that your letters have restored me to myself, at least in part, I take advantage of this lucid interval to warn you against my darker moods. To-day I feel lifted up, serene, confident. The only drop of bitterness in my cup is the thought of how I could ever have felt those unutterable misgivings.

I had had but one letter from you, the dear missive at Denver, and although I was careful to give directions for the forwarding of my mail, a clerk neglected, till I wrote the office — when I received the other two.

Dearest Katherine, what wrong I do when I give you a moment's pain! Believe me, my wretchedness is but a great passion under the torture of long suspense. My life had

come to seem rejected of all the benignant powers. Now it turns to you as to its only refuge, its last supreme hope. Your love is the world to me, and in it I shall find everything again, the sweet face of nature, the pleasant wont of work, ambitions long forgone. And still your love, after it has restored all these, will be itself no poorer but a richer, sweeter mystery.

Your heart has been sore wounded too. Dear Light, love shall cherish you, till you again look on life with happy eyes.

Two years ago we took up our way, each by the same dusty gate of pain, from the Eden of Love where we might have dwelt. We travelled side by side upon the same desert paths till — how was it? — we found each other, I, at least, near to faint.

Have patience with my fears. Every touch of your sweet hand reassures me. In time I shall be stronger, and then my love shall be a refuge for you against every grief.

Dear, dear Katherine, there is no hope for us in this painful, mysterious world save in

giving ourselves to our love. And the happy hours of our reunion are not far away. If I ever get you back again, I shall never let you go. These eight weeks have been a lifetime.

II

LETTERS SENT FROM PHILADELPHIA, FROM JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 1875

PHILADELPHIA
9 JANUARY

A letter must be written, Katherine, and that before I am settled, or rested, or a bit the wiser for all my long journey — just to let you know that all this is so. This letter has no object appreciable to ordinary reason, but its real *raison d'être* is — well, how to express it! — it is something very deep. You see Love is really the Absolute and the Absolute must manifest itself — that is sun-clear — and as all the world has no other reason for being so has this letter none. Katherine fills my head and heart and to write is all I can do — write I must.

Yesterday found me here. I stayed over night in Cincinnati, and sat by a lone grate fire and dreamed of long ago days of hotel life when my visions and dreams were, oh so different! From every long excursion of memory I came round to one sweet figure which seemed to be the enchantress who has

changed everything. She fares all directions in my soul — all of my life that is not pain is a tender dream of her, a dim but beautiful future in which her spirit seems to fill, inspire, transmute all to its own nature.

But there yawns between me and that heaven an obscure gulf. I am descending into it now to seek a path across.

This is only a note. I am not unpacked — to write with comfort. I shall consult the specialists and after that you shall hear at once. I have a cold — one of the petty miseries of life, you know, against which philosophy is of no avail.

Our friends have invited me to hear "Il Trovatore" next Monday. You see what a gay existence I have plunged into. Ah, but music now is only a hemisphere with its sweeter completing in another world. Again I protest this is no letter. Write, my Katherine, without delay to

Yours altogether

BYRON

PHILADELPHIA
13 JANUARY

The enclosed I wrote four days ago, sweetheart. The morning I should have posted it I was too ill. Since then I have seen his eminence, the specialist. He has given his opinion.

Now, Katherine, if he is right, and I have nothing but the certainty of invalidism — long and painful, or terminating more speedily in death — with only a remote hope of recovery — how do I lament the sorrow my unhappy life has brought upon you!

Yesterday I felt the doctor's words a sentence which cut me off from the world of the living. I cannot — it is not in my power — to hope further, nor to strive. The end is actually now and here for me. I think of you as a glorious, warm dream of joy, the flashes of life's sun before it sank away in the west, having been cloud-wrapped all day.

We shall never be happy. I told you so once, but you would not believe it, Kate, and

I let myself be dazed into half accepting what your dear heart prophesied — it was what my own so longed for.

All is yet uncertain in my mind — all but the deadly sense that an end is at hand of all life's living and learning. I do not know whether I shall stay here or go further. I must see several other practitioners in order to feel quite assured of my situation — if there is any conflict of views.

Now, dearest, dearest Katherine, lift yourself above this misfortune. Your love is my best solace, and cause, too, of my greatest pain. How empty my life had been, had you not loved me! I could have yielded it more gladly but not so proudly as now. I may see you yet. I do not know what will be best.

This letter will make you so unhappy I would not send it, if I knew what else to do and not break my promise.

How lonely and wretched I am it is needless to say. I ought to shield you from sorrow, and yet it is my most miserable lot to

distress you. Farewell, dearest heart. Write to me. A thousand kisses.

PHILADELPHIA
19 JANUARY

I was ill when I wrote you last and am not well yet. To-day is the tenth since I was taken acutely sick — with short intervals of comparative ease I have suffered all the time. One of my physicians thinks I have neuralgia. I don't promise myself his encouragement, for it seems to me I am doomed to go to pieces — all my happiness and I.

It is a distressing state of things, Katherine, when my letters to you have to report conjectures of doctors. You cannot know how it depresses my spirits and drives me to desperation. How tender and devoted your heart is I feel, and I have no right to think of it otherwise than as I do of my own. But the painful sense of the incongruousness of lover and invalid will not leave me.

When you are not at hand to kiss away my fears I can not choose but be wretched.

And in a lonely sick room I have so much time for brooding that I do not know how I shall come out of the trial — if out I come at all. I have seen no one here but a couple of old German University acquaintances.

Now, dearest Katherine, do not be distressed on my account if you are not distressed on your own, for all *my* trouble is on your account. My own happiness I can sacrifice, but I cannot endure to think that you should be unhappy through me, whose only aim in living would be to surround your sweet life with something near the service and devotion it deserves. The future is ominous for us. But let us have fortitude half equal to our love and we shall meet every chance.

Write often, and care for yourself as I should care for you if I were there.

PHILADELPHIA
22 JANUARY

A warm sun shone out this morning after storm. Pain had fled and in the troubled, sweet reverie which sunshine and ease

awaken in oppressed hearts, your letter — your dear, warm, true-hearted letter — was put in my hand. I kissed it how many times before breaking its envelope! Was it necessary for me to see its lines to know the soul with whose breath they were laden?

But, Katherine darling, I did not expect — my ear was not quite pitched — to hear that divine, heroic note. How can we ever realize the devotion of love! My expectation has always been less than the greatest things in life — less, too, than its sorrows, for how could I know I should ever stand helpless before such a trial!

I am drawn asunder. You do not wish to be thought of as a child, or as one whose interests must be protected, but demand the liberty of disposing freely of your own fortune, of sacrificing everything to love as is the heart's right? If you are resolved and know your own heart, it is just that I should dismiss considerations for your interests which weigh so much with me.

Whether I live but a short time, or yet

years, and whatever my degree of usefulness, heaven could not do so much for my happiness as to unite our lives. But how hard are some things! With what grace could I, a poor man and an invalid, marry? How can that joy actually come to pass in the face of all the real difficulties, and all the wrath of friends and wonder of the world? This is a question for which maybe there is a solution, but it paralyzes my will in the midst of the pain and disappointment I bear.

I have been housed since I wrote you, some days in bed and at all times under treatment — not in great pain, but confinement has been wearisome and the thoughts with which I have endeavored to beguile the hours were not always radiant. When once the nature of my ill is confirmed, I shall feel much quieter, no matter how bad the sentence.

Katherine dear, do not be distressed — as if I were as wretched as some other in my place might be. For myself I have no fear. That I have no regrets I can not say. One thought, and one only, brings tears to my

eyes, and tears not altogether sad. It is something to have been loved. Yes, it is a greater thing than to have enjoyed any other prize of life. To *be* loved, I should say, to feel that however miserable one is, there is another sweet and noble life living for us.

You have a woman's heart, Kathie — that clings and in its clinging imparts strength and hope. I can not read your letter without feeling a dim ray of hope pierce the dark; without thinking such perfect love must some day blossom into the happiness it carries in its core.

At least it is not *certain* that I shall be a useless invalid, or die soon. There are other chances, however few, and a Great Mercy may melt the heart of Fate in Love's behalf. Let us indulge a little hope, till at least we know we can not.

How my memory treasures every sweet stray moment of our past — handclasp, kiss and heart-beat, the passion of those dear unfathomable eyes, the rustle of garments, the gliding step and lingering farewells! It

seems I could not forget those things underground. Oh, Katherine, yes, I *must* see you again — die in your arms or live in your embrace.

I can not write further — my heart is too full. Do not suffer is all I say. Let my love be something to you, as yours carries me over the gulf of darkness beneath me to a region where there is no measure of days' beginning and end, but only a glorious sense of perfect life.

Our sorrow will purify us for love is thrown in the furnace with our souls. To be more than the spoil of wasting days and seasons is the noble end of every aspiring spirit.

Do not wait, dear, for me to write. The mails are tedious enough. Goodbye. Another day, another pang that you are afar.

PHILADELPHIA
1 FEBRUARY

Your last letter, just reaching me, has freed my heart from great weight. Now I can write. I could not answer the other let-

ter although I tried over and over again. I can not tell why I could not. It had words of love and confidence enough. But for all there was in it such a spirit of dumb pain, of despair — and regret, I even fancied — that it froze me to the heart. You realize my painful situation; you would do nothing to add to my unhappiness unless you were miserable beyond measure. Poor heart! It pierces me with yearning and pity to see how you suffer!

How far away seem those pure, bright days of only last fall! I seem to have lived a happy lifetime in those short months. Were there not alternations of highest hope, of utter despondency, of sweet intoxication? It is to me at times as if I had been transported to some far away land and had walked forest-aisles hand in hand with my embodied heart's desire, the sweet spirit of my dreams evoked by some magic from the great void of the unreal.

Then I remember all — it was our walk along the river-skirted road and through your

father's woodlands, and the sense of its reality touches me till I tremble. How distinctly I see you, Katherine, your slender figure radiant with trust and joy, the setting sun lighting your hair and eyes and lips. What an infinity of bliss the possession of your love seemed to me — the future so full of passionate sweet life that my spirit shrank blinded from trying to explore it; I stopped content with the delicious sense of that moment alone.

You know what I have suffered and still suffer for your sake, but already it has been far more than made good to me by your love. I can never be happy except with you, that you surely know. It is my whole endeavor to make that possible at the earliest day. But I see nothing for it but patience. The future is a long time and there are many things in it. Maybe the happy hour of our union is somewhere in that unpublished calendar. Who knows just where?

You are timid, you say, about speaking further of our marriage. Dear heart, do

you know how much I value your sincere nature? You do not wish our union so much as I wish it, and if insisting only made clear how it could be, I should not leave you time to express a wish. It must be. It shall be, I feel, but how or when I have no power to determine. It is terrible to me to be thus helpless, not to be able to fulfill every wish of your heart — not to say my own one long passionate desire.

One of — well, I have been interrupted and can't finish that sentence — oh! now I have it: — one of these days I expect your picture. Don't forget, you moody angel, and don't let a mood usurp you in which you do not care for *any*body.

PHILADELPHIA
11 FEBRUARY

In the midst of pain and urgent trouble we can not realize the supreme happiness of being loved — sweetest and deepest of all meditations. The reflection of a loving soul in our soul is broken by agitation of grief.

But when we are released from pain and awaken to hope of life and health, the thought that we are loved, or better, words of love, stir one to tears of joy.

I will not deny that my eyes moistened yesterday with your dear, dear letter in my hand. Was it foolish to kiss the senseless paper, to clasp it with the involuntary laugh of uncontrollable emotion? Don't you think one could go mad of pure longing? I have been near it, I am sure, and several times since — well, it is now a very long time and all my life before seems unreal. Will those days of fire ever look visionary and faint in the light of the full moon of love? I know, for I can forget my very existence in a deep kiss of you.

It is raining dismally and my imprisonment continues. I am not suffering pain. Much I am sure is due care and precaution. Then, I have had cheeriness. An old chum, who has been in the south since I came from abroad, spent last night with me. A fine fellow with the bark on. Nothing will serve

him but that I shall go into literary engagements, and he promises to find me work and vitality and patience and fun and success. There is no end to the man.

I made no promises, but if I stay here I shall doubtless turn toward what he indicates. Everything in my future is uncertain to a degree that bewilders me.

The rain without has changed to snow — great laminated patches — falling slowly through the dusky air of twilight. But no snow falls upon the parched lips of love, and alas! there is no Old Probabilities of the Skies of Eros to promise better things.

This letter to my *Lux* and *Lex*.

PHILADELPHIA
20 FEBRUARY

My expectations of a letter this morning were not booked for wreck. I slept last night with happy anticipation filling my head. But much more delightful is the reality.

Your sweet face on the little card has been

my meditation for a full hour. I gaze upon it till my eyes cease to rest upon the shadow and dwell upon the beloved original locked in the heart's camera — where not a tone, or tint, or gleam or grace, is wanting. The picture is better than I expected. Still it is not *my* Katherine, whose charm is not in her shadow-casting opacity but in the subtle sweet life which irradiates every feature.

Dearest, your letters are as capricious and moody as a mountain lake — or shall I say the traditional soul of woman, that *variabile semper* of Flaccus? What a time I shall have making you happy when it comes to be my privilege to watch every veering of your moods!

Now I am not one of the most constant creatures alive myself, and am apt to run through the spectrum which has the blues at the bottom about once a week. But I must sacrifice this luxury if I hope to be of use to you.

Do not fancy that I mean to chide, sweet. I do not. Your sorrows and anxieties are

sacred to me who am their unhappy cause. Our love shall never be ruffled, if on my part patience and sincerity and the all-embracing passion which adores blindly avail aught.

Life is so miserable when it is not utterly filled with sincere love, that I can not abide any patchwork of the heart, any wretched make-believe. You must be everything to me or nothing. If you do not love me as I must be loved, I shall doubtless die in despair as cold as my love is warm.

But this again will sound as if it would say more than it does. I do not ask for more evidence of your love than I have. I should have neither manhood nor tenderness if I did not feel overwhelmed by your assurances. Your love has already more than made good to me the burden of all life's sorrows. I could and would face it again — not for a kingdom, but for Katherine's tender longing.

I do not expect anyone else to feel as I do altogether — but you love me and I love *you,* which is all in my favor and a great difference.

Do not let us hope or even think about my health. *I* dare not at least because I have made up my mind to the worst and dread to have to do it again. But we should be cheerful.

Why should not we be great-souled as well as those we admire? Let us once get the mastery of fortune and ever afterwards keep it. Love is elegiac, it is said, and only kisses will dry his eyes. But it is true Love, Ἔρως οὐράνιος, who must kiss away the tears of every sorrow.

If by any manner of means I could manage to get the Valentine kiss you sent I should be too happy for dinner — but *in vanas auras recessit.*

PHILADELPHIA
23 FEBRUARY

To-day I have been with Professor Kellogg to a neighboring university. Its buildings are of green serpentine marble in a beautiful Gothic spirit (not style) with grey stone basement, slated roof and stained glass windows. The interior is admirable. I met a

number of the professors, sometimes old fogies with a vast amount of assumption in their manner. School life there must be duller than with us.

And after the day's visiting I came home to — your picture and this very inadequate communion with you. Still it seems like an escape from the outer world into a sort of sanctuary — into home. Every day I look at the picture twenty times. It gets me earlier out of bed, and the last thing at night keeps me poring on it. I scarcely know why, but the thought of you seems somehow more real with it before me.

Do not be annoyed at my frequent writing. A letter but three days back I know, but your missive which awaited me to-day set me all aglow again, and I must either write to you and tell you how my heart longs and aches, or else tell someone else — and that, you know, would not be discreet or like *me*.

Your letter speaks of a night of last winter very distinct in my memory. What a desolate sense I used to take home from those

evenings! I was trying not to think of self and to labor only for others. But even that seemed useless. "What ideas of me," I used to wonder, "will Katherine keep in her after-life? Can I add impulse to it? — enrich it with anything of worth it would not have known? She will never know," I used to tell myself, "how hard she made it for me to think and speak."

Ah! love is so selfish a thing we can not play the self-immolator at the altar. It seemed sometimes, in those days, as if you understood how I suffered for love of you, and that you put a cadence of tender pity into your speech to me; or a gentle gesture seemed to say that you knew it all and were sorry. Then again I reflected that you could not mean anything by such impalpable graces toward me.

Nothing ever humbled me in my own esteem so much as the thought that the woman whom I worshipped did not care for me. I did not try to defend myself against you — how could I? — I merely felt that I was

judged and pronounced not equal to my expectations.

How contradictory love is! In that thought I implied that I deserved your love. But when I thought about it then nothing seemed to me more absurd. I aspired to it as the humblest aspired to the highest, in a sort of worship. To be rejected was like being rejected of heaven — and so it really is, for you are my heaven, the one great reward of living for me.

The family ought not to tease you about my letters when they know you can scarcely expect indemnification for their annoy from the letters themselves. Doubtless your devotion to a poor sick devil amuses them. Then maybe they are waiting for your illusion to pass.

I have written about a lot of things and thought of but one all the time. I shall never get the knack of writing to you. When I sit down to it I feel a sort of choking sensation in the throat, a dimness about the eyes, a general flight of ideas and flood-tide of

inarticulate emotion. You will have patience, won't you?

Oh, that little fern! — what things it knows!

PHILADELPHIA
8 MARCH

I have just read your dear letter dated on the first and post-marked on the second. Where can it have been! — and all the time I anxiously waiting and wondering and conjecturing about the sweet missive's delay.

You will be glad to hear that I am still holding my own. Spring has not yet reached us, although we have been seeing the tips of her rosy fingers reaching forward this month or more.

You know I love everything you write — that if you only scrawled and ink-smeared the paper I should be glad to get it from your hands. But how can you fill a letter to me with such a budget of gossip! — so many indifferent things! You have no idea how empty they leave me.

I am a fool, *that* I have a clear comprehension of. You have put me out of all conceit of myself somehow. I must make a determined effort to recover self-control and self-regard. Alas! this letter is bound, I see, to be new evidence of my unsettled spirits. A man should not feel as I do; nor above all give utterance to such emotion.

Don't be grieved at what I have written. I don't mean to find fault with you, but with myself whom nothing reasonable contents. Your letters are my only joy, and do not be pained if mere letters can not appease my unquiet longing. I want to be well so much more than when I thought I had no chance.

In view of the *res angusta domi* it will be necessary for me to do something this summer, even if I return to our University in September. I never before felt what it is to be dependent on my exertions for a livelihood, for there was never before anything I wished with all my heart to accomplish and could not. If I could only see my way a few

months ahead! There is no use trying, however, for I can not even know whether I shall ever get a few months ahead. But I shall not despond if only my health keeps gaining.

Now, dearest Katherine, I am making the same sort of a *billet doux* I growled over on the first page, full of things not very *douces.* But I am not half as good as I would have you, nor as you *are,* you dear girl. If this were not the last sheet of paper in my desk and the stationer's half a mile away, I should burn it and write another — oh, so different! You must not be grieved at anything I have written. If you could see into my heart you would be satisfied, I know.

Letter-writing is a miserable business. I am out of conceit with it altogether. How long shall we keep it up?

You say you have stopped talking to people, except when spoken to. Shall you serve me that way when I am back? My sweet Kate, you must not, or I shall take to not talking at all whether spoken to or not.

The sun has come out since I began to write, and the air is vivid with spring light.

Ex animo yours

PHILADELPHIA
15 MARCH

So you are going to the reunion of the ostrakophagi! Why it meets this very evening, and doubtless you are this moment — seven o'clock by my watch — getting ready. *Multa tibi sit voluptas!*

But what on earth, Katherine, do you mean by wishing I may return so "strengthened that I may not weary of hearing and seeing you"? Did I ever grow half satisfied with seeing and hearing you?

Oh, I hear and see so little of you that I feel as if an evil fate pursued me to shut me out from every bliss I covet. I feel like giving up in despair when I think how long and uncertain my exile is, and that I can not foresee anywhere in the weary future the hour when I shall rest in the sweet shade of your presence. Is that only a mirage?

Toujours à toi.

PHILADELPHIA
25 MARCH

Your dear, dear letter has come with a sunburst of light and warmth to my heart. You thought, you blessed one, that I wanted to "scold"! You would be right if I could ever feel like "scolding" you. But I can not. I was most miserable because I was far away and despondent and your letter, to which I had looked for a great draught of strength, had brought, oh, such a tiny cup of love — but two or three sweet words and all the rest about — well, I have forgotten.

But to-day my heart has feasted. I shall always believe it — it is the sole article of faith with me — that the love is *in* you that I hunger for. When I can not charm it out, then I must suffer. But when I give over my efforts in despair, it comes in pity with a great gush and I revive.

Your sprig of green I have kissed, consecrated to Saint Thomas and removed from your sacred letter because it is dedicated to the Doubter.

Your letter recalls a day of last spring — one among many in a shining bead-roll of memory. Our hearts burned then under the ice of despair. I wept that evening over my formless sorrows. Why should life be so full of hopeless yearning, and of supreme beauty which could not appease? The thought of death came then, as it always comes to me, with a sense of balmy, cool relief. I had only to wait in patience the end. Oh, Katherine, your love has been a torch that has re-illumined in me the love of life. The future I do not try to picture — it is a tumultuous emotion.

Now I must tell you that just after writing you the last time I was ill again. The sickness gave way before remedies and passed off altogether speedily.

I have heard the philosopher Emerson lecture, and a famous quartette play, and seen a much-talked-of gallery of engravings and mezzotints. Alas! how the devotee of literature and the arts has become something else. Art and literature are no longer the

supreme objects of my desire. I know a sweet girl, who may see these lines, whose lips have more eloquence than the great philosopher, more enchantment than the songs of Schubert, sweeter lines than an angel of Toschi's or Antonio's.

Oh, that wide, armed chair where I am to come to judgment! Do you think I fear any sentence passed there? Perverse am I? Naughty am I? When you have once sworn to honor and obey (mark that *obaudio*) we shall not tolerate such epithets.

Dearest Katherine, you know my ardent desire, and that the moment I see my way to its fulfillment I shall fly on the wings of impatience to your arms. I do not yet know that I can again endure the climate at the University. If not, I can not see just where or when I shall form other engagement. In a few years our University will doubtless be flourishing, and a professorship in it would afford the basis of a modest support; at present it is dependence and starvation.

I dislike to annoy you with such things,

important as they are. Uncertain health deprives me of much of the ability I should otherwise feel to make my way in other quarters.

I have prospect of trying my hand here at journalism, and if only for the experience I am inclined to spend effort at it. It is no embarrassment to have two professions. In all my years of study I have never thought of, nor cared for, business. I meant to do what I liked best.

What Light has changed all that? — and with no regrets from me. But it does pain me, dearest, to know you think I could be perverse in determining what so absolutely interests my own happiness and can not be indifferent to you. You must appreciate my embarrassment growing out of not only insecure health but equally insecure income. You do not know what it is to be perplexed by narrow estate.

If life has those moments — ecstasies of health, youth and peace of which your letter speaks — treasure them. How I should

love to take you at such an hour! Should I disturb its gracious power? — should I? — with my *gaucherie?* What reforms of all sorts in my ways of doing and being I promise myself when I am something more than

Your Inamorato

PHILADELPHIA
2 APRIL

Our spring has come at last with the soft laughter of April suns and shadow of April showers. There are no flowers yet — outside florists' shops — nor grass, nor other leafage. Spring has surprised the earth. But a few days more and the parks will stand in their splendor of pale green. This long, cruel winter will be only a softening memory. My pulses beat freer, if they do not yet bound with the delicious life that makes you beautiful and glad.

Your own little rapture of a letter tells me all about it. Still, I have other sources, and the same news comes that way, too. Katherine in sorrow would break my poor

heart with pitying love, but Katherine in ecstasy drives me almost wild with a glow and flood of delighted desire. How can you write me that you are so happy? Don't you know it makes my enforced absence intolerable?

Fate means that my love for you shall be burnt into the deepest grain of my spirit by the most wonderful encaustic process of despair, hope, intoxicating joy, patience, absence, desperation, and some day — if God is good enough — this picture of a great love shall receive a transparent varnish of happy possession to bring out all its colors and keep them ever fresh.

Do you have visions, you sweet saint? I never thought you were likely to see such. I thought you were more your father's daughter — who has no great phrenetic tendencies. But so long as you have visions of the true God, that is, the servant of the true God who came into this world on purpose to love you, I shall not complain.

But pity me for visions are slow to come to

my eyes. Instead I have merely a faculty of reviving impressions. Sharp memories of kisses and long sighs, of warm hands and tender obscure glances, I can feel and see again almost as when they were real. You do not call those visions, do you?

How strange a δαίμων Love is! He feeds on such memories as these and grows into the strength and purity of an angel. He can suffer death and torture with enthusiasm, but needs to be kissed, caressed and sighed over. At least my love does, but I have often thought he was a Sybarite; yet I know he is a hero, too.

My health is fair, although I am doing a great deal of writing towards the book we talked of. Next Tuesday I am to meet the economist Carey, whose works you know. My studies this winter — except my brown studies — have been on sociological questions.

Give my love to your mother who is my greatest benefactor, for did she not give me

more than life? To you I send what Catullus calls *seges basiorum.*

PHILADELPHIA
12 APRIL

It is the woman's genius, dearest, to find herself at home in any novel situation sooner than can one of my embarrassed sex. While my pulses are still so much a flutter with your first kiss that my letters are full of the turbulence of love, yours have settled into the clear full strain, the ardent, even beat which is ruffled only by your gay sallies of tender mirth. How ineffably beautiful you are to me!

There are many felicities Love has for those who love and fear him, and one crowning beatitude — to feel that overpowering, tender yearning in which all things blend that are high, ardent and pure — a sentiment which carries in itself the assurance that it is stronger than time or death.

Our flesh, our individuality, is but a veil of the Eternal and Infinite Life, and Love burns through this veil. We are not to seek

to enter the formless, divine Spirit beyond, but stop and worship its great heat and light at its sweet human portal. It is strange that anyone who truly loves should need a religion of the churches.

Do you think or wonder that my love suggests such thoughts? You will not think it any the less human and tender because it is worship as well as love? Do not fancy that it is for that reason exacting and visionary, that I look for what the world calls "divine perfections." It is of all loves the least careful about such divinities.

One thing only — a great thing — it does call for — that is a perfect, measureless trust and love in return. Give me that and you can have no faults to my eyes. Then you may live a gay, sweet lady with all the petulance, caprice and whim you will, and I shall be your mad lover always. I reap in advance joy of the inward assurance I feel that my love will be always the same tremulous passion — the same feet-kissing devotion it is now.

You want to know if you shall see me in May — when woods are green and thrushes sing. I have no patience and tact to accomplish what I wish, now spring is come and you are calling. Still I must wait till I see the president of the new University at Baltimore, who comes on next month — the institution is to be made a great affair. Then I shall let go all my fastenings and come under full sail straight to your arms.

I do not tell of the incidents of my stay here. They will fill our confidences at home. Do I find fault with your sweet temper and cheerful moods? Far from it. Be as serene and caustic as your heart desires, so you keep your pungency for the faculty and your serenity for me.

To the princess Katherine

Her most devoted thrall

PHILADELPHIA
25 APRIL

Dear heart, you will have distressed yourself over this delay, I fear, before you can hear account of it. I was in Washington

when your last sweet letter came — away two days visiting an old friend. With all my movement my health remains *in statu quo,* unassailed by pain, although I do not feel vigor with the returning spring. How can I after so long a deprivation of joy? Shall I ever be well and strong and glad altogether?

You speak with some apology of a certain type of woman. Is it because they love so little? — have so little ardor? — or because their hearts are always straying and never perfectly true? It must be some such reason. Many women are beautiful and brilliant and joyous. Are none innocent and ardent and true? Do not let me think that.

You know I always feared I could not make you love me as I love you. Do not undeceive me yet. You once hoped that I should be able to re-inspire your heart with a heat it no longer felt. I have the letter, Kate darling. It made me very miserable, but it was at least frank. What could I do? You

trusted me. You seemed to want to love me, and I did what I should have thought myself incapable of — tried to disguise facts to myself. Do you love me at last? "Yes," I think your heart says to itself, "but not quite perfectly. That will come in time. If not, he need never know."

But what am I writing? — words which ought not to be written. I should not send them if not sending would annihilate them. But you are my best soul and I will keep nothing from you — not even my doubts. Forgive them, Katherine. I shall not always doubt, and if I were to, I should love you all the same.

Our friends here have found us out and they came in the other day — the rascals! — and pretended to know all about it. They congratulated me most warmly, and are of opinion that I do not deserve half my fortune — which shows how sound their judgment is, for I myself am of that mind, too.

It will be May before I hear from you

again. I hasten this letter to hasten its answer.

Yours eternally
BYRON

PHILADELPHIA
5 MAY

A sweet letter this morning to flood the day with sunshine. I had waited for it anxiously. Now let me be thankful and not complain of delay. I am just recovering from cold taken in some mysterious way. How grateful I am that it has not settled into the old neuralgia! Nothing in my health to-day should lead to pride, but the worst a cold can do is nothing to the old evil. Certainly I have made headway.

Dear heart, you ask if my doubts are the fruit of absence, or if I feel them when with you. Won't you believe me when I say that I do not doubt you. I rest upon your love. My own faith is too utter to harbor a suspicion of yours. From what could I save myself by ever so sagacious doubting?

There is but one thing in this world I should rather not know if it happened — that you had ceased to love me.

No, my heart is all too earnest, and has too many heaven-kissing projects of life builded upon your love to lose more time in testing the foundation. If it is not solid everything will come down with a crash and bury me in the ruins; but let me die rather than not build at all.

Now I have news you will not welcome I know. The editor of *The Press* holds out inducements to me to try my hand at his paper. If I succeed I shall be relieved of the drudgery of night editing, and shall have only prime editorial work. I am not confident of my aptitude, and if I do not succeed to my complete satisfaction shall drop it. This will keep me from you. But if I can get employment for the summer I must. Expenses of specialists and no incoming salary trouble me.

Another object is worth my attention. The great Johns Hopkins endowment is to be

organized and the projected University opened. Of course I can not be confident of a post in it. But it will advantage me to meet its organizers, as I am invited to, and know its relations. A man can not live on the paltry salary at our University — since the late cut.

But my heart is breaking to get back to you. Hundreds of miles part us, and all these duties call and keep me, strongest of all the hope of sooner saying to my dearest, "Come, share my life."

Doubtless it will never be luxurious. It may be plainer than I hope, but with Katherine's love it will be a life to be envied by all who have sense to understand it.

My plans here may in a few days go up in smoke and I able to keep my original engagement about Commencement. Let us hold ourselves in patience.

PHILADELPHIA
14 MAY

Your dear letter came yesterday, and with its new pulses of love mingled a memory of

the older — a year old to-day. This is my heart's birthday after long travail.

How strange the sunlight on that May afternoon! And what a delicious sense of mysterious happiness awoke me suddenly the next morning long before my usual hour! It was a second before my eyes were used to the inner light and I could think of the cause. Then the thought came rushing — "Katherine's kiss — yes, I kissed her. She loves me." It seemed a dream; but songs of birds and the morning's brilliance helped to make it real.

How often before had I wakened with the heavy sense of misery, dumb, not understood — till the old settled mood returned and I knew too well why my heart was sick. At times I strove for days to banish your image. I struggled to think I could forget, or at least overcome. Then I would break down and revel in a dream of you, and it would end in the wild misery of a fresh despair. Oh, Katherine, you did not know what it cost me to live those years in your sight.

It is all turned to joy now. The lesson I learned I shall never lose. I ate the bitter bread of humiliation till it was no longer bitter, and I made renunciation a companion. Life was over for me; and it has been a long time regaining hold upon me. You, Katherine, brought my new life and are utterly inseparable from it.

Day after to-morrow I begin work on *The Press* — as first assistant. The editor thinks I have the best sort of journalistic material, and he anticipates success for me. I am simply making an experiment, and can not fail to profit by a few months in a large office and responsible position.

I shall not cease to look for a good location as professor of something somewhere; but if I should find that I really have a career in journalism, why not stick to it? Certainly I prefer an academic life, and am inclined to think my work lies in the University, but I will try this thing a turn.

Your undergraduate studies are all over — *laus Deo semper*. But if I were at home

you would have to conjugate an old verb I know all in the dual number.

PHILADELPHIA
26 MAY

Yesterday, my Kate, when I awoke at noon, I found your dear letter on my pillow. The good people of the house know with what eagerness I receive those slender blue envelopes, and they thought to afford me delightful surprise. They have dim conception of the thoughts the little messenger inspired. Matter-of-fact people, they never sighed like furnace. One right conclusion they have come to, for they think you must be an angel to be so loved.

My health keeps fair and I endure the night-work satisfactorily. The most disagreeable feature of my business is that I am literally muzzled — kept from a word on those subjects which interest me most. *The Press* is an administration organ and under obligations to nearly all the miserable monopolies in the country. All good paragraphs are on the other side. It is just the

office in which to acquire a newspaper style. You are bound to say nothing in an interesting way.

Now, Kathie dearest, what do you expect to do this summer? If you enjoy it, my own imprisonment will not be so hard to bear. Write me cheerful letters anyhow, for these conditions of life strain me and I feel my patience sometimes almost spent.

Your love grows more and more the only deep, rich heart of joy in the world for me. How I can live on without you I can not understand when I think of it. I only know the long days do wear away.

When shall we have a home together and a united life? It depends upon the success I have in an untried field. My heart sickens to think of it. I shall not falter but be nerved by my desire — well nigh intolerable — for that life.

Work presses and I must break off. One long sweet kiss will make me whole again, so why complain?

Forever your BINEY

PHILADELPHIA
30 MAY

Not to lose its effect what you say should be spoken slowly and with intelligent emphasis, the fine lines in it with a sense of their worth. They will then be distinguished by your auditors. Do not seem to share a common ardor. You will be understood save by few, and you might as well be aware of the fact.

Come in at the finish with all the cool sense of superiority which you have a right to feel. The public performance ought not to give you a moment's trepidation. Be resolved to be heard by clearest and most weighted utterance. It is the thought which fastens attention.

My health continues fair, and my work grows easier, although if I would improve I must make great exertion. One must pry into everything to be a journalist.

Spring nearly flown and almost half a year from you! Your patience grows while mine gets shorter as the days go on.

PHILADELPHIA
2 JUNE

Your message has come in so late this evening that I have but a moment to answer before going down to work. I can not wait till to-morrow.

Sweet Katherine, I submit to your provoking little disclosure that you have something to tell me, that I must make myself ready to hear — and then you explode the bubble with a sigh of solicitude for my peace of mind and a puff of contempt for the story, leaving me as much in the dark as ever. If I had not a good conscience how this method of doing would torture me! As it is I only itch to get my arms about your shoulders — and then wouldn't I make you talk? — or kiss you till you did.

Your letter is full of the tenderest heart on earth, my own dear Katherine's. You have a secret you want to tell me, do you not? Is it that you already have a home for me if I will accept it? You fear the offer will hurt me and write in enigmas.

I am in no wise prejudiced against a wife's wealth. A home is the work of husband and wife, but present-day social usage, and the unequal position of women and men, make the husband responsible for the support of this home. He should feel his ability to sustain it before he undertakes it. Afterwards he may receive what help he legitimately can. I need not assure you that I love you too well to feel any delicacy about this subject. If I were not so certain of my love I might not trust my motives.

You speak of my ideals that must be sacrificed on your account, and are unwilling it should be. Dear heart, do you know I have no ideals now. I have an idol and a holocaust of all my dreams before it would gladden me if it gladdened it — and you are that idol.

I get but forty dollars a week, but this will be raised probably to fifty before long, if I continue to give satisfaction. Of course I should not stay long at the work at that figure, but it will probably be a year before

my services will bring more. You see the means over which I dispose. We might live here modestly — very — and I should be most happy to be with you.

Now Katherine, it remains with you to say if we shall end this heart-ache, not as Hamlet proposed to, but only as it can be ended. I do not venture to insist because my offer is not better. My own heart has but one desire. You talk to a soul that echoes every wish of yours. Do not be timid. Write a clean-breasted letter. If I have mistaken your meaning, you will pardon me and be assured that nothing but the loyalest love speaks in all I write you.

Goodnight, sweet angel. I must go a-par-agraphing.

PHILADELPHIA
12 JUNE

Two letters of yours unanswered, dear Katherine. It is almost more than I have courage to tell you. I am recovering from another attack of neuralgia. Day before yesterday it began to threaten and forced me

from work. All day yesterday I was in torture, and now I am sore and exhausted. I seem to have contracted a cold — and the pain returned after a long interval.

I had grown so confident that I almost expected never again to suffer. It now seems as if I had gained nothing, and I am in the depths. "What if it keeps coming," I think. Then all the old misery is back.

Dearest, we are certainly to be tested to the limit of endurance. Times are so hard that no salaries are increased, and I can not tell when I shall be able to command the minimum pay which would warrant my taking you to share my fortunes.

If ceaseless longing and the courage of any sacrifice could shorten the time, it would indeed be brief. We must still drift without a clear point to sail by save the pole star of our constancy. We may come no nearer together, but we fall no further apart.

Your sweet, sanguine letters, led by your high spirits, see everything in rosy light. You say you wish to be useful — to have def-

inite occupation — when we are married. It is a noble ambition. It will make your life happier than it could be in any petted idleness. But it is most difficult to be useful in the way you mean. Social conditions are such that it would be almost impossible for you to take any initiative yourself. And I would not wish you to. In time my pursuits might be such that your assistance would be money's worth. For the present there is nothing you could do that would make any adequate return unless you starved at some profession — *quod avertet Deus.*

As regards you I share the aversion American men feel toward married women's labor in the larger world. I would gladly see your time pleasantly occupied by pursuits you relish — but you should not be pushed to do aught but enjoy a rational and moderate activity. Such labor may be made useful. It has no market. What men pay for is slavery.

I never knew before what it was to be poor. It means to suffer every deprivation under heaven. With plenty to eat and wear and

go on, I am poor because it suffices only for me. What do I care for all the world without you! If I had been trained to some bread profession and not loitered so long in the lotos-land of learned dreams, I should not now be so helpless. Now I know the difference between a visionary and a practician, and am endeavoring with all my might to become the second from being the first.

A great newspaper office is a good school, for it is a focus of all the tendencies and influences which prevail in the actual world. There I see all the hideous deformity of life. My abhorrence deepens while my composure increases. How different from the academic regions where I have tarried! — where the purged spirits of the great and good reign — where patient and candid zeal serve.

The summer will soon be spent and autumn here. Shall golden October see us together? Would to God I could tell! If my health holds, and if my salary improves — these seem to be the conditions. It would not be worth my while to return in Septem-

ber to share the University crust with the handful of hungry professors. It may never be worth while to go back, although there are many reasons why Lawrence should be a happy abiding-place for us. In years to come I should love to frequent the rooms and haunts where our love grew till we had to give up to it, will, heart and hand — for instance, I should like to stand where I used to stand of mornings and watch for your little crimson coat rising over the hill like a star.

More than ever yours

PHILADELPHIA
20 JUNE

My sweet bachelor

How shall I express my gratification at your good fortune — first in getting out of that old Thinking-Shop, and next in doing it so gracefully?

Oh, if I could have been there to kiss those eloquent lips and carry off as a sort of conductor the surcharge of your happy enthu-

siasm! All I could do was to take account of the time and think "Now Katherine is waiting," and "Now it must be that she is speaking," and "Now she is done" — that was after twelve o'clock — was it not? — and before one? I was happy to see the newspaper's report.

Our weather is delightful and since my work is at night I escape the days' heat. How magnificent the city is by the June moonlight! — after the streets are empty and silent. I turn homeward just before the sparrows begin to twitter from houseledge and tree. The Park is lovely and there I sometimes wander, but I have little time save for newspapers and office-work.

Elements of a journalist are deeply covered up in me. For the work it will take two or three years to get my forces in hand. I write on all sorts of topics, with no care nor elaboration and so of course without much effect. The indispensable thing is rapid composition. That I have acquired. Now comes the learning to write well as well as

fast. I may yet find it more congenial to go back to the professor's chair.

I must close — but not without wishing aloud that I could spend an hour — oh, just one hour, what would it not be worth! — near you this summer weather.

I work with but one aim, but sometimes it seems like the stars — none the nearer for all my climbing. You must pour out the letters, now your time is free. They must not be on three sides of a tiny sheet.

Yours eternally

Thanks for the roses! Their scent entombs the whole glory of Class Day, and has caught a memory of the sweetest, dearest, oh, inexpressible —

PHILADELPHIA
26 JUNE

The clock just struck three, and, back from work, after a sponge bath and early breakfast, I sit down to answer your last dear letter. You can not conceive how my heart swells with love and gladness at this

priceless evidence of your love. For do you not say "Marry me"?

It more than heals the wound of the Administrative Board's action. Loss of my chair I make light of. The insult is in the manner. My proposition left them free. They could have given me option of returning at a reduced salary, or of resigning. By their summary dismissal they have injured my professional prospects. A professor's position should be taken from him only for incompetency, bad conduct, or in case of financial necessity. But of this enough.

All commands from your lips are sweet, I say, and now have you not said the sweetest of all? Marry you, blessed Katherine! You know that nothing but poverty delays that happiest day. Until I have an income, how can I take you to be my wife?

A man can not put himself in a position of dependence on his wife's relatives. The situation of Tantalus would be easy compared with such a lot. You fear the effect

of business worry upon my character, and perhaps with reason. But therefrom come the strength and calm of seasoned experience.

Day is breaking as I write, and dream here of you and shorten my hours of sleep. You must ever believe, my Katherine, that you are become integral part of my nature. I love and worship you all the more for your tender boldness in pressing upon me what alone I live for — your life and love — but you must see that unless we have money in our pockets we must bide our time. Hope, sweet, that that may not be very long — may be next September.

You turn in your sleep, perhaps, while I sign the name of your most devoted thrall

BYRON

PHILADELPHIA
1 JULY

Dearest Katherine, two days have passed since the coming of your double letter, your own pulsing words of aspiring love and the

saucy little chatterbox hid under its gracious folds.

The rector of Saint Infidelius would pull the wings of the Seraphim from before their shaded faces — in the very presence of the Throne. His advice is well-meant — how could it be anything else when it would hasten the happy hour for which I toil and wait? — but for that very reason it is "superfluous and ridiculous excess." Your own sweet mandate has all the power it is possible to exercise over circumstances.

Dear heart, your letter breathes that aspiring sentiment which makes our love a true worship. To be constant, tender, passionate, is not enough for it. My heart at least, in the excess of these, the elements of love, feels a new sense born, and I have no word for it but worship.

I feel somehow that the Holy Power which sustains and moves this ancient universe of wonderful and beautiful forms, reveals itself to me as Love — the essence of my own uncomprehended life in your sweet spirit.

To love you and serve you and drink from the cup of your tenderness, and to sink my life in the Divine Life through you, seem to me the supreme end of my existence. Love is a cult — rightly understood — and our love shall be our religion, shall it not? To each other we shall reveal only the divine attributes of tenderness and patience.

The account given out of the Board's vote against me was false. You, darling, must not take their action too much to heart. Consider what a prejudiced set of men such a Board may be — at times laggards in the better works of our day, blunted in perception of truth, perhaps dehumanized in sympathy. Better behaviour we should not expect. Before now vastly more learned men than I have lost their places and suffered persecution at the hands of much better men than they.

I have ceased to regret their action and turned myself to succeed at my new work. Write often, Katherine. Another time a better letter.

PHILADELPHIA
6 JULY

You will not expect deliberation, dear Kate. A cool place is not within reach. Since your letter came I have been so crazed with noise that I could scarce think of you, not to say write to you.

Marvin, to whom I sent my opinion of the action of the Administrative Board, assures me that they labored under misapprehension of my wishes, that there was no intention to affect me injuriously. I say in answer that it is still in their power to reverse what they did and make good an unintentional injury, and I await their action before forming settled judgment as to motives. That admits no evasion of responsibility.

How ill-fortuned that my letters to you must be filled with business, and that, too, of no agreeable kind! But I wish to let you know such matters, although it is not what men commonly talk to women. A man wishes to conceal all the disagreeable detail of his struggle for existence from the woman

he loves. Fruits and loveliness alone he wishes to lay before her. But unless his advantages enable him to follow his devotedness effectively, attempt is sheer folly.

The next years of my life are a struggle with fortune. Anxiety is with me that my exertions may not be sufficient to sustain the home upon which my heart is set. You stand and watch my battle and nerve my hand, but the sense of what is at issue almost unnerves my heart.

If only I had been trained to make money instead of to pursuits which are not paid! "Patience!" I hear you say. In time I shall get a mastery of gain.

On *The Press* everybody shirks work in this heat. I have to write the leaders now.

For the good-night kiss you sent, I wish I could give you a thousand by daylight.

Write often, Katherine, and love me ever.

PHILADELPHIA
14 JULY

Your sick letter at hand, my dearest, the first complaint of real illness. Oh, how I fear those visions are not good.

At English's conduct I stand appalled — disparagement of me as a scholar, betrayal of confidences that inflict humiliation, and monstrous falsehoods which he has coined and spread to my harm. Iago is outdone. Not a living motive in the heart of the man but cravings for praise.

Among other abominations he has a tale about my injuring a young lady when I was at the University of Athens, a lady of good family and character, an acquaintance of his and mine. A picture which I left with him bears her striking likeness — a likeness we both remarked one day before I left Lawrence. Well, he has told that I purchased the picture because of its resemblance.

This is a specimen of his lies, and from some reference in a letter of yours, Katherine, I suspect the tale reached your ears. I

asked him to leave the picture with you and he wrote that you did not seem very ready to receive it and, "if he were I, he would not press it."

Katherine, my Light, I should die of misery and disappointment if it were not for the absolute confidence I rest in your love. One heart beats true to me, and is such refuge that I shall never again need to trust a perfidious soul. You have my life in your hand. I can not harbor a suspicion of your truth. It is weary, I know, loving a sick man who is hundreds of miles away. But I am getting stronger — and shall not always be far away.

Do take care of your precious health. Otherwise I must be your nurse — and all your life. You don't want me to address myself to that office, do you? I should keep you dependent, I fear, in order to wait upon you.

My work goes forward without a jar and I progress in the difficult art of writing on current topics for the public.

Do not be distressed at what I have had to tell you of the "friend" who supplanted me in the University post he undertook to guard for me.

Yours world without end

PHILADELPHIA
18 JULY

Your letter assures me of your convalescence, Katherine. May these lines find you as wonted — sweet and strong and cheerful. You are a blessing to all near you — a darling to love and dote on. But be careful. Next your love your health is my most precious possession.

Of the late perfidy let us dismiss every thought. The dishonor will devolve where it belongs. There is a world outside the antipathy our University seems to harbor against me, and somewhere in that world we shall find resting place.

The next few months must reveal our future, at least a green glimpse of it, a future worth living for I think. I am resolved never to give another mortal my confidence

— another save you and two or three old, tried friends. Wise is he who trusts and depends on no one.

My health improves and I am more rugged than for a long time. But doubtless I am still subject to relapse. A great enjoyment comes from my work, or rather the sense of advancing in it blesses me. Still there remains much to acquire and overcome, but if my health holds and your love abides I shall conquer.

Remember me to the dear mother of yours.

PHILADELPHIA
29 JULY

A long delay you will think, Katherine! And what can be the reason? I have been ill over a week. The days wear away and the pain grows lighter, but still it persists and culminates once or twice in twenty-four hours.

Every day I have dictated an article or two and so have not abandoned my post of labor. But I could not very well dictate a

letter to you, Light of my life. This I write propt up in bed. The weather changed to wet and cool and that accounts for the long pain.

You will be sorry to get this letter, Katherine, and you will feel as great a despair as I when the agony seized me — despair lest I may never realize our dream of love and life. I seemed especially well before the attack and was thinking of spending my two weeks vacation with you at Lawrence. My heart aches when I remember those days of last fall. But I shall be well again, and if the improvement I have made can be rendered permanent, even if not bettered, I shall be content.

Summer will soon be gone and autumn I feel must bring in its harvest the solution of our secret. Your noble sweet constancy has earned the faithfullest love a man ever gave a woman, and if that will be reward, reward you shall have. Our marriage will be what few marriages are — a perfect union of powers and desires. We — you and I —

take the same earnest, high and free view of life and we shall sustain each other in every aspiration.

PHILADELPHIA
8 AUGUST

Kate dearest

The last illness, from which I was not recovered when I wrote, dragged on. Stormy weather, not yet fairly over, distressed and kept me from rapid convalescence. Still, as I wrote you, I was able to contribute a fair share of editorials to *The Press*.

Rest assured that I am well cared for, not indeed as I should be by a certain sweet-lipped girl I know, but as well as humans can be expected to discharge such duties. I may never be free from such attacks. The utmost I hope is to make them so infrequent that they will not seriously interfere with my work, or greatly impair my strength. If you will love me, Katherine, I fear you must make up your mind to love something of an invalid.

In about ten weeks I hope to see you — in

the very tide of autumn. A few days with you among brown fields will sink in poppied oblivion the long pain of our separation.

We shall talk the great question, when can we make our home? If my earnings afford me a competence, I shall not wish to postpone the happy day by one revolution of the earth.

We shall grow together in our work. Life is too short to enable a poor man first to spend years upon his culture and then years in accumulating a property before marriage — if he marries for love, that is.

PHILADELPHIA
18 AUGUST

Won't you leave the worship of Harpocrates, my Light, till I am near you, and in your sweet eyes can read the meaning of your golden silence? The days that pass beyond the expected date of your dear letter have a shadow on them, and the mornings that do not bring your looked-for words are empty of all matutinal freshness and splendor.

It seems a long time to you — our fifteen months of love and ten months of separation. Absence makes time seem long that would have passed like a bird through a garden. You can not know how sad it is to think that I am the cause of our separation — my ills and incapacities. I fear almost that you will weary of loving me.

Then indeed I should despair of myself and of life. I always have thought of you as a queen to serve, as one compelling love and making the terms hard. While I entreat your patience I have no right to speak of patience to you.

Dear Katherine, will you understand these loose words? You will not feel, I think, the depth of passion and of worship which surges under their salt spray. But, yes — you will — you must know better than all things else that I love you perfectly and utterly.

My health is good again, but the weather is for August unprecedented — continuous rain.

I can not kiss you, nor will I delegate any-

one to do so but the bright Apollo. He may kiss you brown and sweet — but at a distance.

PHILADELPHIA
28 AUGUST

Your short notes at long intervals touch me, darling Katherine, like a dying sound further and further withdrawing from my hearing. True they still whisper the enchanting word — *love,* but I almost begin to compute the time when they shall have vanished utterly. Illness and care fill your time, you say. Alas! that you should not be free from painful solicitude for those you love both near and far.

My health continues and my spirits are as buoyant as hard work and little news from you can make them. I dare not think how happy I should be if you were by my side — here at work with me — without almost rebelling against destiny. How hard I shall strive to make our income equal to our needs.

At the office I have not yet spoken about advance of salary, because I feel my efforts

have not met all the successes which would justify it. But I have succeeded in gaining a place in this newspaper writing and the confidence of our manager. He expected to raise my wage provided I did well, and I am sure he will. A few dollars a week make all the difference in the world between life's weary monotony and its supremest vision.

I still hope to keep my promise and see you in October. It may be that we can return together — that is, it is not all impossible. How long notice would you have to have, sweet Katherine?

But such glories depend — yes — on fifty dollars a week. Is it not the most satanic thing in life that Love must be a pensioner of Mammon? Not even he is free. But he can yearn, and dream, and weep, and hope without money.

To-day is my twenty-sixth birthday. How gladly would I take the stripes from you!

PHILADELPHIA
4 SEPTEMBER

Your letter this time is full of matter, dear Katherine. Besides it is the second unanswered and so I feel outnumbered and outweighed.

Your father's advice about remaining in this coast region I fully appreciate and shall act upon. This however not on account of a superior moral tone of affairs here, for Philadelphia is ruled and robbed by as vile a set of men as exist anywhere, but because here my knowledge is more valuable to me than it would be elsewhere.

We have to come to it in the end and grasp squarely hold of the pestilent machine — business. Then, in the keen contest for bread, there is end of generous aspirations for the race. My task now is to learn to write what people want to read about current affairs. If I can do this, I shall be tolerably rewarded.

To anticipate anything would be ill-judged. And in our marriage we will do

nothing contrary to your parents' wishes. You must be free to act without trepidation and uncertainty.

You do not give me quite your whole confidence, Katherine. You hint at somewhat you never let me divine, so that I feel an unsettledness too vague to name, too impalpable to dispel. Dearest, the world has neither my confidence nor my great regard, but you I both love and trust. I never thought I deserved your love, and you know I was not insensible to the great responsibility it brought. Dear heart, always be frank with me, as you are beloved by me.

PHILADELPHIA
11 SEPTEMBER

My Light

I can not wait an answer to my last unkind letter, but beg you to forgive me for it before your lines reach me. It was only for a moment that I harbored the thought that you were not frank with me, and in that moment I wrote.

I could not understand the frequent allusions in your letters to somewhat you would tell me after a while, except as evidence of a want of perfect confidence. But when I think such a thought of you, or shadow it in my letters, I am stung by an after-sense of intolerable remorse. The thought that I have given you pain makes me desperate. In addition to all the sorrow I have been obliged to be to you, I have not heart to add another slightest grief for any cause.

Forgive my letter, or send it back to me, won't you? How wretchedly weak we are! It seems to me that nothing could ever induce me to say or do aught painful to you — and yet I do. But you must know how I love you — better than life — even as I do divine goodness and all beauty.

Soon I shall be in Lawrence, and then we will make all things right again. I suppose the University is in full blast with the intellects of my false friends roaring in the furnace.

Here prospects move happily. I am en-

gaged upon an investigation of our municipal affairs with the view of making them theme of a lively discussion. The work brings me in contact with many unusual characters and men of strange points of view.

To-day is our first fall day clear, cool, far-away. I feel well and if I thought you would not be angry with me, I should be in good spirits.

III

LETTERS FROM PHILADELPHIA AFTER HIS VACATION VISIT TO LAWRENCE IN THE YEAR 1875

PHILADELPHIA
29 SEPTEMBER

Last night, dearest Katherine, I got back, safe and sound after a disagreeable journey. I had existed in the vortex of a cyclone of dust, cinders, carbonic acid gas and iron filings ever since I waved farewell to your sweet face, and so you see I was not unprepared to relish the luxury of city air and the quiet of paved streets.

This morning, much refreshed, I shall go to my duties. Already I feel the advantage of this climate in a certain sense of ease and quiet which I never enjoy in the dry, electric clarity of Lawrence.

Your letter was a great temptation — it had awaited my hand so many days! But, after kissing it and holding it up to the light in vain endeavor to read its message, I laid it unopened in my desk as I promised. Now here I give you warning that the only chance you have of keeping my eyes off it is punctually to write me others.

Give my love to the family, and do you, Katherine, do your best to break the habit of melancholy into which you have fallen. If you do not, I shall have to honey you out of it.

PHILADELPHIA
8 OCTOBER

The best news I can send you, sweetest heart, is that I got the letter — full of yourself — resolutions, banter, effervescence and all. The next best is that I am still enjoying good health.

I have committed our secret to my housepeople and they are anxious we should stay with them during the great anniversary. It is going to be difficult to find comfortable quarters. These are not large or elegant, but I think you might be satisfied for immediate months to come. Boarding with the family we should not need more than two rooms. Such arrangement would settle our domesticity but you, Katherine, must tell me if you have objections to this plan.

Let me caution you not to overdo. Your

strong spirit bears you too far. When I make the great journey after you I must find you no shade less brown, no shade less sweet, with the same curved lip, the same tangled, wind-blown hair.

Ah, Katherine, I am mad for a girl's grey eyes.

PHILADELPHIA
15 OCTOBER

Light of my life

What did I open my eyes upon this morning but your sweet letter — lying on my pillow! How like a living thing the tiny billet seemed, a love-bird weary after long flight and quietly abiding my awakening!

The world is growing mysterious to me again after having lost most of its deep significance. The immanence of a great passion warms the blood and makes spring in the imagination. I seem to live two lives — one of the dryest and hardest realism, my world of work; the other of mysterious lights, and sound, and vast and beautiful things,

and great ardors and happy hours — my world of reverie.

I am glad that you agree with me about our domestic order. It would be ill-advised for us to undertake to settle ourselves at once. Let us be together when we plan and choose our neighborhood. The rooms here are to be furnished anew for your coming, but since the house will not permit, I can not give them just the look I want.

We shall be married — *te volente* — in February. In February, oh Katherine, if God grants my supreme desire, I shall have you here with me — here, oh Light, with me. Time passes on leaden wings and it really seems six months since I kissed the blossom mouth and dainty chin.

My health holds good, although I suffer constantly from colds. Let us hope that the nursing you say you have in hand I shall not need. I undertake that you shall have all you can attend to in caring for my well hours.

Our friend, the professor, could hardly

deglutinate the evangelicism of the sectarian institution you name.

That popular work, "Force and Matter," is in many respects a shallow thing.

Write to me often, and love me always, always, always —

PHILADELPHIA
24 OCTOBER

Dear heart

As the days pass that bring us nearer our new life, the whole significance of the change it implies dawns ever higher upon me. I have lived on letters and dreams so long, with one luminous fortnight only of your presence, that I almost fear the rising sun of Love that reddens the horizon.

How can I realize it! There seems to me to be a life's happiness in every one of the many phases of our love-life which I foredream in all its heights and depths of joy and labor. You say it takes a wonderful deal of patience to make a woman. Do you think a man's life meets with less obdurate barriers?

We shall care little for the ceremony which

joins us before men. But there is a sacrament of marriage which I hope we shall repeat in our hearts, and it tells us with more severity than the formulas of the church that marriage is a state of cares and toils which love must make sweet, that indeed its greatest glory is its duty — that if it were relieved of its burdens it would be robbed of its sanctity and deepest joys. They do not love who find love's sacrifices irksome.

But you will think I design a lecture when I merely mean to echo the sentiment of your dear letter, which is as full as your tender heart of love's earnest purpose.

Through you I seem to get a glimpse and breath of your golden and purple October. Revel in it, sweet, and drink the wine of health shed out of its lustrous skies. You make the whole bright west fairer when I think its light and air bathe your form.

In Philadelphia we have less of the poetry of autumn and more of its material beneficence, for it makes redder cheeks and keener appetites than in Hesperia. You will grow

stouter here, my slender Katherine. I hope I shall continue to deserve your esteem.

February then is the month blessed above all others — which is to give me your daily companionship. That ought to compensate for its short calendar.

My health is still unbroken — *favete linguis* — and my love reaches through this letter and your hands to your household, and especially to my new papa and mama.

Katherine's lover,

BYRON

PHILADELPHIA
2 NOVEMBER

I snatch an interval of leisure on this evening of election-returns — while everything about me is in a whirl of excitement — to write you, sweet, not a lecture for your sad-hearted letter, but if possible a word of cheer. It will be hard to send sunshine and breezes to your soul, when I could not, with all my kisses and chiding and chatter, keep you from drooping while I was there.

What terrible foreboding oppresses your soul? I can not divine it. It seems some terrible premonition. You say you were not born for happiness. Oh, how you make my heart ache with such cruel forecast!

If it be as to long life, none know the will of fate. Feebleness or uncertain health at your age is no evidence either of future ill-health or of brief life. But why trouble ourselves about what we should await with cheerful acquiescence in the great and reverend order of the world!

You must be happy. The decree has gone forth. It is my life's work, and failure in it I can not brook. If I can not make you happy and contented, I had better never been born. You have said you do not care for wealth, and whatever else you demand I undertake to procure you.

Do you not know our life will be one long sweet dream and worship of love? — and can you be sad-hearted when its dawn is but three short months away?

Dear heart, you have not ice-water for

blood in your veins, and you should let all the old sad leavings of memory consume in the divine flame of a new life and a real passion. I shall be busied for many years in studying out ways to love you, and all my other years in repeating for mingled love's and memory's sake my old joys. You *must* not be sad, sweetheart, and all aweary of existence with the warm heaven of love impending over you. It is wicked, do you know?

This letter I fear will not cheer you. If it is confused, lay it to the uproar in the street — a great political victory.

I am not feeling in best trim, but still I am not ill. Doubtless you are well by this and ought to have written and dispatched a second letter.

All my love to you.

PHILADELPHIA
9 NOVEMBER

If my letters are short, Katherine, yours are not long, and yet you have the more time.

Somehow I find it unaccountably difficult to write you long letters. In the first place there is no little gossip from Philadelphia, for we have so small acquaintance.

Then again it is always a lamentable failure when I endeavor to put in words what I feel toward you. It is something so mysterious and gigantic, a great, dim, choking emotion that will not unfold in speech or song.

So it comes that my only resort — that a most unfortunate and poor one — is to lecture you, as you call it. Now and forever more I abandon the resource — when I find it one on which you can make so much better draughts than I. Your first essay has been so successful that it has effectively discouraged me for the future.

But I must offer what reason I can for my writing the letter to [Frank] Harris. You saw it of course and will therefore be able to judge of the value of my plea.

You know I have no confidence in or respect for the moral character of the man and

could not therefore dream of making him a confidential friend. He has, however, been so persistently kind to me, and seemed to build so much upon my good opinion, and besides wrote me so ardent and eloquent a letter, that I could not find it in my heart to answer in terms not somewhat touched with warmth. But I was careful to express only that enthusiasm for humanity which is natural to me, and goes out to every one who appeals to it — without meaning to establish relations of personal confidence. Doubtless he understood me in a personal sense. I wished only to benefit him by pointing out that the only foundation of friendship which I recognize is that of personal honor and devotion to great and worthy aims. I overdid the matter and felt that I had before your letter brought it home to me with so much force.

Your task, Kate dearest, shall not be as hard a one as that of many wives in breaking off their husbands' old enthusiasms. This one is not real, you see, and there are only

one or two that would really cost me to give up.

What you anticipate will surely be. February will see the dawn of our new life — whose glorious beauty and sweet hours are of our own creating, built of the light and heat of our souls alone. I am recovering slowly from a very bad cough and have had no prostration from pain.

Your far-too-emotional BARNEY

PHILADELPHIA
18 NOVEMBER

Dearest

Your good-natured letter found me in bed as usual, but this time with no intention of at once getting up. A badly sprained ankle will keep me housed for several days. Coming out of *The Press* building last night I stepped not quite clear of the last step — which I meant to skip — and so doubled up my ankle. Well, I am endeavoring to take it philosophically.

Now, Katherine darling, do you fancy you

can draw me into a lecture? Not a bit. It is really your prerogative anyway, and I never should have invaded it. I can not find half as good cause as you can, nor lecture half as well. I purpose to rely altogether on cozening and finesse for accomplishing what infrequent aims I may have. Do you take warning.

But in all seriousness, sweet, your penultimate letter was excellent and deserves to be acted upon by me. I have suffered a great deal from the rudeness, ingratitude, duplicity and insensibility of those I have trusted and loved, and I have made resolutions before now to forswear everything in the name of friendship.

Such is the selfishness and insincerity of men individually, and such the monstrous injustice of social and business relations, that it is impossible for a man of simple, strong feelings to avoid the utmost wretchedness, if he interests himself deeply either in individuals or in public and general affairs. I have the impulses and the intellectual con-

stitution of the old-time socialist, but my experiences of social and political conditions make me despair. It is intolerable. I can not endure the constant sense of the great gap between what is and what ought to be — yes, and what might be if the twentieth part of men's professions were realized in their lives.

There is only one refuge, that is to the world of art, science, learning and nature. I will take from social relations the best, and in my sheltered kingdom of the ideal and impersonal build the bower of Love — the only guest worthy of admittance.

But as I have to achieve this seclusion while laboring in the very focus of the social and political contest, you see the task is no light one. I must study carefully all conflicting interests and ideas and champion certain of them. Yet I must not allow them really to involve my sympathies; and the only way to do this is to keep ever before my eyes the Gorgon thought that to all this savage struggle there is little outcome of

good to the persons engaged. Unutterable poverty — I fear — will ever be the lot of the millions, dishonest gains and arrogance the preeminence of the few.

Still there are Homer and Plato, Beethoven and Shakespeare, and Goethe, others too many to name, and all nature, and you. Yes, in you, Katherine, I shall find all the human sympathy I need, and it will be of the purest, deepest and most precious kind. The one or two friends of whom I spoke are bachelors, whom I know to be honest and kind, and nothing could be more unobtrusive than their friendship.

Sweetheart, do you know you ought not — but that is the opening of a lecture. I mean I am not making sacrifices for you, Katherine, and it pains me to have you speak in that way of what I am trying to do. I would make sacrifices for you — any sacrifice. But to make you mine is not to make a sacrifice *for* you, that is in the *dativus commodi,* but for you — to get you, that is. I can not make sacrifices. I can not offer a

thousandth part of what you are worth.

Will your wedding cost you as much pains as May's costs her? I had much rather have you alive without a trousseau.

The rector of Saint Infidelius is still, I see, worrying with the orthodox. He has himself gone on from faith in a personal deity to pure pantheism. Personal immortality will go next. What an idle business, preaching the religion of Spinoza to people who have never understood the decalogue! And then it is not Spinoza who preaches either.

Ever and ardently your
BYRON

PHILADELPHIA
27 NOVEMBER

Shall I ever, my Katherine, be past the necessity of sending you bad news! One evil no sooner laid than another is at hand. This time a severe cold has made me an invalid. All the fall I have suffered from a stubborn cough. Last week it got worse and

I had a high fever. The affection seems to be chiefly bronchial, but there is danger of serious issue. I am taking best care of myself.

Now, dearest, we can only be patient. The old difficulty I have pretty well mastered. Doubtless I shall conquer my new enemy. My present anxiety is to be well-rid of it before February comes with its golden snows, luxurious rains, cheerful sleet and dreamy breezes.

Your dear letter I have read and all its inner sense deeply pondered. I see you have been a little hurt by some things or ways I wrote — more for idle banter than aught else. Believe me, Katherine, I received your faithful and wise reproof with the reverence and love with which I am sure you gave it. A noble woman is made "to comfort and command," and I am sorry for any irritation I showed. Really it was more in jest than earnest.

But I do not agree with you that this "first lesson" in our life service should be

the last. What is needful is not that we should learn to excuse or overlook fault in each other, but that we should have perfect confidence in the sweet and faithful spirit in which advice is given. Only let our reproof never be animated by a spirit of self-assertion, or domineering, or fretful fault-finding or of anything even more unkind than these. But always let it be as true and gentle and patient as love itself, and we shall both profit by each other's judgment and observation. We should not exert ourselves to repress our advice, but to make it worthy of the dear and sacred relation which we sustain.

Already we have begun preparations for your coming. That is, we have chosen paper and are having it put on the rooms. To look at it does me great good — it has an air of "for sure" about it, and is a trifling, material evidence that Katherine is coming and the dull days to that sunrise are not many after all.

Do you ever stroll nowadays through the woods and country lanes we know so well?

What shall you do when you come to Philadelphia for all your old country liberty? Here you can go nowhere without the cars, and must ride for an hour to get out of town. You will have little of social life, for nothing is of much weight here but immense wealth. A literary and artist class there hardly seems to be, at least the elements of such a class are not organized. Snobbery and pretence rule supreme — and some of the writers and artists cravenly train with it and get down in the dust to meet it.

But I have no serious apprehensions that we shall find the time drag. Certainly I shall not. I never do anyway, and with Katherine I could live the ages of Brahm and in Brahm's seclusion.

But what has put it in your head, sweetheart, that you must not write to me about yourself? Why there is nothing else I care a fig about. If you could photograph your every movement, and record your every word for an hour, it would make a letter I should study with all my eyes and all my heart.

It is past sunset, but the sun is still shining upon you, my Light. At this moment you may be thinking of

Your ever faithful

BYRON

IV

LETTERS SENT FROM PHILADELPHIA FROM JANUARY TO APRIL 1876

PHILADELPHIA
9 JANUARY

You want to hear from me, dear Katherine, instead of from the nurse. I am very weak. It is great effort to write, but for you I make it.

We are waiting — after long weeks of pneumonia — to see whether a solidified lung makes a favorable termination, or whether it will do the reverse.

Have patience, darling, whatever happens. I have the best of care.

Yours forever

BARNEY

PHILADELPHIA
14 JANUARY

Since I wrote you last, Katherine — I remember the few dismal lines — I have gained in strength. Signs are good, but it is not yet certain the termination will be favorable.

What is certain is that in any event my

convalescence will be long and tedious. This week closes my connection with *The Press*. Friends have held my place for me to this time. But I can not impose further on their goodness.

Well — there is nothing for it but a new start in the world under less favorable circumstances than before. For now my health stands in the way that was open to me. What I shall do I can not decide. But for one reason it would not be of the remotest importance to my feelings.

You know what makes the future full of solicitude to me. At times it seems to me to have been a criminal act by which I linked another's happiness to the unsettled and unsound body of my fortune. I had nothing, not even health, and yet I dared to ask for your love. It is impossible for me to rid myself of the idea that I have done you and yours a great wrong. All our happy plans are once more dissipated, and the future again opens up a boundless waste with no blossom in sight.

Have you patience, dear? I could not blame you if you had not. But if you have, and will still wander with me, hoping somewhere and sometime to join the aching current of our lives in one full stream of love — if you have, my heart shall never swerve from its one desire, and my labor shall be to compass it.

All this may be premature, for my life is not yet secure. Do not be over-anxious, Katherine, on my account. You know your presence would be inexpressibly delightful to me, but you could not nurse me as you think, and then there is much that would embarrass you here. My care is of the best. Do you only write frequently. But utter your whole heart.

Yours, yours, yours

PHILADELPHIA
19 JANUARY

My own Katherine

You can not imagine with what pleasure I read your letter of the thirteenth written on

receiving my first note. I have sent you a full sheet since, but it fell between.

My heart is glad that you can take so reasonable and patient a view of our circumstances, which are in themselves distressing enough without being made more so by an impractical and impatient temper. Heaven knows I am both impractical and impatient; but I endeavor to simulate prudence, and patience, and especially I rejoice when I get outside assistance.

You know I have little or no hope — it is not an element of strength with me — but I cultivate self-renunciation. Still I can not relinquish the dream we dreamt two years next May. It stands to me for life. It is all life means to me. In the prostration and weakness of my present condition it is difficult to realize that I ever may be strong and sound again, but others have recovered and my case is promising well according to my doctor's opinion. I am constantly gaining strength.

I write these lines sitting in a great leather

chair, propt and blanketed. I sit up a couple of hours a day, read considerable light matter, have a chat with our academic friend and write to you and mother.

I am glad to hear May's husband is better. What ails us wretched men of to-day that we have so little health? It is a shame for us to marry, and a wonder that anybody will have us, especially the nicest girls in the world. There are a few sound men yet. They ought to be at a towering premium. *Caecus Amor!* My love to the family; a thousand kisses for you.

PHILADELPHIA
31 JANUARY

By the time you receive these lines your patience will be worn very thin, I fear. There is not only the long interval of your own making which you have had to wait out, but also several days of my proper neglect.

You will forgive me, however, when you hear that I have been so busy all this time gaining strength that I think I ought to be forgiven. After all I have not gained a very

great deal. When I shall be quite well is a question. I make it out sometime next summer — this if I get well at all.

Now, dearest girl, what a queer little head that is of yours! It makes up its heroic mind to be patient and brave under painful circumstances, but the result of the effort is only to create a greater restlessness and brooding in another quarter. Home "that has not for long been so quiet and restful" becomes an intolerable confinement, and my Katherine longs to strike out into the wide world and do something for its good. She asks if I know any opening.

Of course manual employments are out of the question for my delicately bred girl. The professions are virtually closed against women — that is women can not yet move in them with the freedom of a member in good standing. Then moreover my sweet Katherine has no profession. She could hardly take to the Bohemian existence of certain ladies of the press I know. There remains the art pedagogic; but she would learn little

teaching school and not see the world on very unfamiliar sides.

Now, my Light, what shall I advise? I am conscious that this discontent is the fruit of disappointments which I feel more keenly than you because, if for no other reason, I am their cause.

If you wish to fit yourself — in case of necessity — to earn your own support, you should best devote yourself to some specialty of letters, or science, while you have time at your disposal. But I forbear for obvious reasons for further advice on this subject.

Give my love and felicitations to the *νεόνυμφοι*. To you, my Katherine, I can not send love for you already have my whole heart in your keeping.

PHILADELPHIA
7 FEBRUARY

You will excuse the delay and the brevity of this note, dearest, when I tell you that for the last four days I have been suffering from the discontinuance of anodynes, and have

slept little. Otherwise, the doctor says, I have gained.

Your last dear letter deserves a better answer and shall have it sometime, let us hope, in that future where we are obliged to locate so much of our happiness. I have to-night no mind for any of the items that make up a letter. I only know and feel in undiminished distinctness how great and true my love is and how wholly it involves me whether I live or die. After all that is all.

PHILADELPHIA
12 FEBRUARY

Another long delay, Katherine, but if you knew how hard it is in this weariness and unchanging condition to get about a letter, you would rather wonder that I write at all than that I am not prompt. I grow better, the doctor says, but I hardly realize it. I still suffer and am oh, so weary of my room and bed!

To say that I am lonesome would faintly express my sense of utter desolation. It is

no longer an acute sense, but a sort of atmosphere I breathe and absorb — that has wrought my whole being to its tone and nature.

My resolution is taken to go home to Humboldt — but that may not be for months. I must make a long pause and take a new start in the world on another plane of experience and purpose, if I am ever again to meet life's duties.

This terrible affliction may not be without its fruits to me, for certainly I had needed a calmer and less obscure purpose. Not to be ever striving after the unattainable, but to gauge our tasks to our forces is indispensable to the conduct of life.

I know that we shall both grow in that serene wisdom which is the fruit of self-limitation. We long to be together and to enjoy the bliss of perfect companionship, but we should not be utterly cast down because we are debarred from paradise for a time, and a time, too, in which we can do much to ensure the permanence and depth of our hap-

piness whenever we are once admitted. We can come to realize, ever more clearly through our trial, that our love is a perfect, pure and exhaustless spring in whose abundance we can securely trust.

This prosy letter has not at all expressed my meaning and I do not feel strength enough to write another and a better. Believe me

Ever your own altogether

PHILADELPHIA
15 FEBRUARY

Your letters get better and mine worse, dearest. The last of yours was very full of you. But I write with so much difficulty, and under such a weight of unhappy circumstances, that I think for all the comfort my letters can bring you they might be written by an acquaintance. But that acquaintance would have to have more discretion than one good friend of mine.

Indeed, dear Katherine, I have written you the worst account of myself. I have all

along feared that a consumption might establish itself, which would make way with me altogether. But the doctor is now sanguine.

I do not wish to inspire you with any delusive hope. Although I gain strength constantly, I am harassed by a cough which may mean bad for me. Do not think I would deceive you for one moment. I hope a short time will decide definitely my situation and prospect of health — for everything depends on that. My present state is inexpressibly painful.

I note your transmission of the rector's message about "grit." Dear, it is not a question of grit. I can not and will not marry as a sick man, and if I am well I will conspire against destiny to achieve the happiness which only your love can confer. I believe that you appreciate the reasons which inspire my resolution. I know that you are more anxious for my happiness than your own in all you think or do.

PHILADELPHIA
26 FEBRUARY

I am your debtor for two letters, dearest. I delayed answering the first in order to let our correspondence get once more in step. We do not average more than one letter a week, and it is better that they succeed one another, as orderly letters should. How mischievous it is of you to take my remarks about your writing in such a refracted light! I shall not soon venture to speak again of those little thin sheets of delight you send.

You pity me in my loneliness. I can not say I bear it with complete patience. But patience is all I have for it. I long for the end, whatever it may be. But longing does not clear the uncertain future.

Why should I be displeased at your going to a reception? That would be a pretty piece of male tyranny — when I am unable to share a gaiety with you to insist that no one else shall! Dear, you must follow your own heart, assured that I shall never wish you to act other than sincerely.

I sit up almost all day now, and go from room to room. But the cough remains.

> Ah me! for every bosom-nestling joy,
> Behold a sudden doom far in the sky!

PHILADELPHIA
7 MARCH

It is when I write to you, Katherine, that I feel most acutely how slow my recovery is. I do not seem able to gather strength beyond a certain point. Perhaps with fairer weather my convalescence will take a new start.

I much wish to set out for home early next month. What will be my joy once more to greet your sweet face! My heart is too full of wild longings and sad foreboding for me to dwell upon the thought of our meeting.

May's husband, ill on his wedding trip, will gladly be at home, where alone we find the sanctuary of sorrow and pain — the only place where one can suffer without humiliation. There is an eternal incongruity between marriage and sickness — between the

Io Hymen and the *Ai, ai,* of the sick bed — which even the pitifulness of Love can not justify.

I have the slightest curiosity to know what action the University will take upon the decision of the legislature to consolidate the classical chairs. If it threatens to disturb the idyllic little home of Professor Robinson the decision is unpardonable. What are universities for if not for professors!

Dearest Katherine, you misunderstood me in my last letter. By "following your own heart" I meant that I would have you do whatever your heart permits — that is whatever you do not *feel* to be inconsistent with the love you have for me.

V

LETTERS SENT FROM PHILADELPHIA IN APRIL, 1876

PHILADELPHIA
2 APRIL

They wrote you of the hemorrhages, dearest Katherine. I undertake to write these lines myself — they are lines no other soul can indite for me.

In answer to your last letter so golden-warm with love and memories I must send words of despair. The disease is making headway. It is a struggle now of vitality with consumption, and where is there any vitality in this exhausted frame? The battle is lost before begun. As yet I do not suffer greatly.

I have written for mother to come. Indeed she may be here before my summons reach her. I have picked out all your letters and tied them up so that they will come to you, if I never do. I attend to such matters that they may be off my mind, and I beg you, too, if the worst happens, to keep such of my books as you care for, and give

the rest with my manuscripts to my family.

Now, Light of my life, I must turn my face to look upon the end. I can not turn it from you, from what is sweetest and divinest in this feeble life of mine, but all else I must shut out till I grow in love with darkness. I can not think for you — nor advise you one word in this hour. In the future I hope you may be happy in some way which a merciful heaven will devise. You will be miserable now and I will not try to console you. How can I? — do I not suffer pang for pang?

But the end of life is rest for me and for you. When I see the inevitable portal, that gate of forgetfulness, I long to make haste and sink within its protecting, saving shadows.

But I shall have strength to write again, perhaps many times. Goodbye for the present.

PHILADELPHIA
12 APRIL

Your letters, sweet Katherine, have never been so dear to me as during these dark days.

Your love never shone so strong and clear as now when fed on no airs of hope, but burning up from the depths of your true, great heart.

Oh, Kate, it is the cruelest stroke of fate that threatens us, the most bitter infliction which life has for innocent hearts — the defeat of life and love upon the very threshold of their fruitful union. What we have dared and dreamed has been only a preparation for that life which I fear we shall never taste. We have nothing left but to meet the inevitable and inscrutable decree with a serenity and courage as great as our love. We can show the same spirit in misfortune that would have made fortune for us something nobler than mere success.

The doctor holds out some encouragement to me yet, but I am loath to take it. He thinks I shall soon be able to travel, and that if I go to Colorado I may still recover — that is, live to be a consumptive. But better early death than such a life — such a death in life. A few years of invalidism, of slow torture that is, in the very presence of all my

unattainable desires — that would be no gift.

I look for mother here to-night and my heart aches for her when I think how inconsolable she will be. In one of your late letters, Katherine, you wonder if I do not think it heartless in you because you do not come. How can you think me so wrapt up in myself, so blind to the obstacles in your way? No, no — but I can not write more. I am very weak.

You can not write too often to

Your

BYRON

PHILADELPHIA
18 APRIL

This is only a few lines that I feel able to write at this time, even to you my best and dearest — whose sweet letters are so rich in comfort to me who am not rich in it. Do write as often as the distillation of love fills your heart's cup of pity for our common lot.

As soon as the weather gives promise of a few clear days and my strength gets to where it was before the last attack, mother and I shall start. My only hope is in the efficacy of change of air.

But better than all hope is the inalienable consciousness that I have been, am, and shall be loved by my heart's queen, the tenderest and sweetest lady in the world.

PHILADELPHIA
24 APRIL

I send this note, dear Katherine, on the eve of setting out for Humboldt. When you receive it we shall, if nothing happens, be at home. We can not go to Lawrence and to you for obvious reasons. The journey will be great trial to my strength. But it is imperative. As soon as we reach home I shall let you know how the way used me.

Imagine, dearest, the thoughts that occupy me at this moment, and the longings youward. I can not write what I have in

mind. The weather is favorable, and we have secured the state-room in a sleeping car.

Your adventurous

BYRON

VI

LETTERS SENT FROM HUMBOLDT IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1876

HUMBOLDT
28 APRIL

You will be glad, my Katherine, to learn that I reached home without mishap. I have good hope that I may improve with the advancing summer.

We can not meet yet a while, dear, but be sure I shall seize the first opportunity to give myself the greatest happiness that now lies within the horizon of my possibilities. I must first settle down here and wait for beginning benefits of change of air. The weather will be steadier and more innocent shortly.

I have nothing in the world to do but seek healing. The quest of the Golden Fleece was not more difficult, nor was its prize half so glorious — for I seek life itself and a sweeter Medea. Who knows the toils and dangers by the way? There is one sovereign lord of fortune, that is Courage.

Let your letters be not few, precious Light.

HUMBOLDT
3 MAY

Bad weather; and I too depressed to write you, Kate dearest. To-day I am better, but still in no wise to put my heart on paper. Wherefore this feeble utterance.

Your sweet letters, which have been coming to me from east and north, are ever tenderer and truer with the weary time. I confess it, Katherine, when I first loved you I did not believe you capable of such divine constancy. I loved you for lighter things. But now I may love and worship you for all my soul can figure to itself of worshipful and lovely.

You will have patience now to wait till we can once more renew our vows in the sacred solitude of the oaks, and the more sacred presence of Love who will "sneeze his approbation on the right." I do not want to leave home while I am so much of an invalid as to need particular care.

HUMBOLDT
9 MAY

I am not yet able, dear, to write the letter I purposed — which I intended should carry to you some, at least in small part, presentation of my present mind and mood. You know what weather we have had. While I can not see greater strength, I do find myself sensibly relieved from the suffocation which has so long tormented me.

We have a young lady cousin of mine staying with us, who is already become the admiration of our town. Not yet twenty, she is a widow of nearly six months, and belongs to that class of women I find unendurable. With as little heart as understanding, she conceives herself irresistible and talks of her triumphs *ad nauseam*. Still the poor child must be endured and as soon as possible married off. Unhappy the man!

How proud I am of my dearest Katherine when I see such miserable frauds of women. A tender true heart that loves unselfishly, and seeks and understands a love which is not the

mere surprise of the senses effected by an unwomanly expenditure of womanly charms — but why should I go on to describe what I love to her I love?

HUMBOLDT
16 MAY

Saturday I received a letter from your dear hand and heart, and it bore the date of Thursday. Does, then, time drag so slow with you that you get two days wrong in your reckoning? Ah, me! If I were to date my letters by my heart I think I should have to change the century figures at least.

Your letter, Katherine, was oversanguine of seeing me soon. Certainly I shall come to you before all my weakness is "lost in the ruddy glow of health" — if that may ever be. Improvement is so very slow, and I have so much to gain before I shall be anything but a miserable sick man, that I can not promise myself as near the happiness of being with you. I am still so weak that my hand trembles almost too much to allow me to write. I barely master it.

How can you say, dearest, that I can not realize what our long separation has cost you? Do you love me better than I love you? It is impossible. Your tenderness and constancy have surprised and overwhelmed my heart with joy — have made me feel speechless and powerless — from the fulness of the passionate love which they evoked in my own breast for you. Anything and everything borne for your sake seems little to me.

I can never comprehend a love toward me like mine toward you, nor do I crave it. Not that I would reject it. But how could I know or profit by a love which neither in life nor death finds any adequate expression!

If heaven wills we shall some day, after many years of loving, discuss which of us loved best. But I fear — how sweet the fear! — that with hands clasping close we shall come to no sure measure.

Do not be too hopeless of seeing me in a few weeks, for we can not tell how fair weather may build.

Write, write to your convalescent

BYRON

HUMBOLDT
23 MAY

Your frightened little extravagant note, dearest, with the apprehension that if I were not ill I must be pouting, was somehow so weak in the feet that it was overhauled by the letter following it before it reached my hand, and I received both together. But letter and note were so full of the tremulous joy and fear of your priceless love, my Katherine, that they made me unspeakably happy. In the darkest hour of pain and despair I have but to recall to mind that Katherine loves me — really, truly, tenderly, devotedly loves me, and I experience such a thrill of joy as the angels in heaven do not know.

Oh, my tender-hearted, darling girl, when will this weary time come to an end, and the sun rise for us whose glorious light reddened our skies and freshened the winds of dawn in our hearts two years ago! It is the sole

link that binds me to the love of life, but it is mightier than all ambitions, all dreams.

People talk to me of the failure of married life and point out instance after instance where selfishness, idleness, pride, vanity, arrogance and worthlessness have made homes into hells — you must hear not a few discourses of like nature. And yet while I fully comprehend the truth of it all, I can not feel a single fear save that our marriage may not be soon enough — or not at all. That I shall always love you I know. That your love will be as constant I unfalteringly trust. For me there is no alternative but death.

Shall I tell you of the highest proof of my confidence in the depth and strength of your love? It is in the fact that notwithstanding my dark prospects, and my solicitude for your happiness, I have not withdrawn from a relation which would certainly be a sore burden to the generality of young women situated similarly to yourself. My pride and scrupulousness would compel me to take upon myself any burden that could lighten another's.

But I have so believed in the pure fervor of your love that I have not dared to undertake the responsibility of acting for you. Can you put yourself in my place, and do you understand the motives to which I refer?

However, as you say in your own letter, only the coming years can fully reveal the love that fills our hearts and labors now in vain for utterance.

The last two days I have gained much in strength. I *do* walk out and even ride horseback. I think it cannot be later than the second week in June when I shall be able to see you — to spend some time with you before going to Colorado.

Write often.

In unspeakable impatience yours

HUMBOLDT
29 MAY

This morning I have risen with the sun, dearest, for the purpose of getting these lines ready to send to the early post, having already delayed till I begin to stand in fear of

one of those desperate little notes of yours suspecting me of some incredible aberration of mind or misfortune.

The fact is, Katherine dearest, the bad weather of last week depressed me much. I was feeble and dispirited. But in the last few days I have gained amazingly. Yesterday I felt better than I have since the illness began.

An old army surgeon of this town will have it that I have not suffered any falling away of the lung, but that my trouble is bronchial. He urges me to spend the summer roughing it, that is, in crossing the plains in a wagon.

Your wish that I should be in Lawrence during Commencement I can hardly share. I remember my old students with liveliest pleasure, but between associations too painful to revive, and others too sacred to behold the profanation of, I prefer to stay away.

Yet, thinking further, I do hope to be in Lawrence before Commencement, and,

once I am there, something besides the senior class must be *com-mensa* to drive me away. There is one magnet in Lawrence, or near the town, sufficient to draw me, were there any ἄνοδος, from the region of Hades — it would charm me back from Paradise.

You must be prepared, dearest, to see a sick man who has lost, not to speak of outward semblance, nearly all his spirit and a large share of his judgment. He preserves nothing intact but his love which seems to have increased at the expense of everything else. Do not take my delay as a model, but write immediately to your anticipating

BARNEY

HUMBOLDT
8 JUNE

I am just able to pen these lines, dearest Katherine. A cold rain-storm a week ago so aggravated my throat that I had the greatest difficulty in breathing. I have not suffered so much before — in the same length of time. It all followed days of rapid amendment and

has disheartened me. I fear it will delay my visit to you.

But, sweet, why have you not written? You must not forget that I live by the breath of your love. In a few days I hope to do better than these lines.

Your suffering BYRON

HUMBOLDT
13 JUNE

Your note of Monday reached me to-day. I sent a note last Thursday telling you why I was delayed, and I am extremely sorry and vexed to find it not posted. It goes with this.

It is incredible what continuous storms we have had, and equally incredible how I suffer in such an atmosphere. Two weeks of uninterrupted fine weather would do me a world of good. To-day dawned fair after a night of rain, but now, at evening, a storm is coming out of the west.

Katherine dearest, I know what you have borne from delay. I think I know. Only God knows what it has cost me. I can not

come to you in my present state, although I hoped by this time to be able to.

This tension of waiting has become almost too great for my poor strength to bear. Suffering has weakened my will, and even my understanding, it sometimes seems to me. You, dear, while you love me at all must have patience with my misery. I would bear greater things for you.

HUMBOLDT
20 JUNE

A few moments in which to pen you a line and get it off in to-day's mail. Yesterday and to-day have been the first really fair days we have had this June, and already I improve. I have been brought low by bad weather and must gain a great deal before I shall feel fairly like a convalescent.

It gave me sorrow, my faithful Katherine, to learn that the misunderstanding of an unlucky sentence in my last letter caused you pain. I said "while you love me at all" not from a feeling that you might cease to love me, but from a sense of how hard your

task would be while you love me at all. I can not feel fully, I admit, that so great and sweet a treasure as your love is surely mine under all vicissitudes. But that is not any fault of yours, dearest. It is because I find it hard to realize its truth.

There are many things I long to say to you. My heart promises itself a great unburthening, and a great strengthening, from our meeting. My happiness seems sometimes near, and sometimes very far. Nothing stands in our way but feeble health. A summer may restore that or it may never be restored. What a terrible suspense!

I close to reach the post.

HUMBOLDT
26 JUNE

The present fair weather is adding to my strength, Katherine, but it happens to me as to other weakened persons — the process of recovery is more painful, at least more harassing, than extreme debility. I have a dreadful aversion to pen and ink which only my still greater desire to hear from you enables

me fitfully and unsatisfactorily to overcome.

It adds to the hardship of writing that I can not send you cheerier news. Everyone will have it that my lungs are not seriously affected, that the difficulty is bronchial. Whatever it is, it so distresses me that I do not gain strength sufficient to effect a rapid cure.

I must go to the mountains before long and I fear I shall not be in a condition to make you a visit. Perhaps you will say that any condition is suitable for that. But I can not find the resolution to go to your father's house till I look more like filling the character in which I come.

You will not misunderstand, Katherine dearest. I do not surmise any loss of sympathy. Your family has always been very kind. My own pride prescribes my action. I hope between now and the middle of July I shall pick up sufficiently to enjoy the privilege of seeing you.

I had almost forgotten your query about Japan. I should much like to be a Jap. If

you have any influence with the Mikado, and he will assign me an estate in the most delightful part of his empire, I will sever the ties that bind me to the land of Our Fathers and, taking with me what is dearer to me than all lands, become his liege subject.

Your cherry-eating, fan-vibrating invalid

BINEY

HUMBOLDT
INDEPENDENCE DAY

Five days of rain and cloud have again brought me low, dearest. I have been unable to write. The suffocation I endure is unspeakable. It has worn upon my nerves and made me utterly unfit to be seen.

It is no longer of use to try to give expression to the disappointment and unhappiness which my condition causes me. They are beyond expression. They are as great and terrible as the longing I have felt, and the happiness I have missed, are great and sweet.

And how can I comfort you when I have

no comfort? When I can not bear my own wretchedness how shall I lighten yours? There is but one thought in which I find relief, such as it is — our suspense and my pain can not be of much longer duration. This summer and autumn must tell.

Dear heart, you remember my first confession of love — it was a confession of my own love. Still, now I have the stranger confession of your love. Again a wonderful sense has ripened within me during all these days of absence and pain — a blessed, exhaustless certainty that your love is very love and the sweet, divine sister of mine. Before, I believed you loved me and thought you loved me, but it is only of late that I seem to know it. Do you call this a sick man's vagary?

HUMBOLDT
13 JULY

What wild surmises will not have passed through that dear, high-carried little head of yours, Katherine, on account of my long delay? I must confess, sweet, that I have not

been able to write before. Days of drenching rain hindered recuperative energies of body. But now I am better, and planning to start for Colorado.

You suggest pretty plainly, Katherine, that I have not the courage to live. I wish it were not true. You have more of such courage than I, and you must make up for the lack in me. I shall always come to you for the inspiration of strength.

There seems now only one thing in the world I fear — ill-health. If ill-health I ever conquer, there is no fate nor fortune I would exchange for mine, because you will share it whatever it may be.

Your martyr of love and patience

HUMBOLDT
24 JULY

You doubtless have looked for a letter from the far west, dearest Katherine, and here comes the old post-mark of that little town — of which you know so little as not to know that it prospers two railways, and

that it is possible for the naughty lover of the sweetest lady in the world to escape to the far mountains without passing through Lawrence, the home of that lovely girl and object of his avoidance.

I was too unwell to venture on the journey last week. I have been actually unable to write, or I should have told you sooner of the delay. Since yesterday I am better and in hopes I shall breathe the dry air of Colorado before the end of the week. All arrangements are made even to purchase of tickets.

These letters, my darling Light, report no good news and are most unsatisfactory. All our future is in such a dense mist as to blot out the sweet visions absent lovers use to console separation.

We can not discuss our plans for the happy time to come with any heart. We can not even praise Love between us for so fearful a joy as his presence is to us. We can only clasp hands silently in the dark, and with a patience akin to despair await the uncertain outcome.

Only a man's heart knows the pain it is to make the object of its love and tenderest worship a sharer in such gloom, instead of the happy bride and the sovereign lady of his whole and happy life.

A thousand things remain unsaid between us, but I trust your true and deep heart to divine them.

VII

LETTERS SENT FROM DENVER AND BOULDER BETWEEN AUGUST 1876 AND THE 4 OF MAY 1877

DENVER
4 AUGUST

Katherine darling

A word must satisfy my desire to write and yours to hear.

I reached Denver last night in better spirits than when on Monday afternoon I left home — and that notwithstanding the fatigue of a long journey, and the annoyance of even longer delays. Through the failure of roads to connect, and delay by washouts, I gradually became used to the dry thin air of Colorado and already feel great relief.

I have to send so many letters to-day that I must beg your indulgence for this. Write at once that I may be assured that the golden fetter which I carry about the world, and which links me to life and hope, is not loosed at its other end.

BOULDER
17 AUGUST

Another letter, Katherine dearest, in that long, long correspondence which had made

the very look of paper and ink suggestive to me of hope deferred and heart-sickness.

How near we seemed last fall to that happiness which is among the few things in this world that I have been content to adore in great entirety, without analysis.

We were to be happy first of all because we were to be together. Then because we were to have a thousand opportunities to serve each other. How many pursuits in common! How many little plans for our own happiness and the happiness of others! How divine and sweet the paths of duty and of wisdom-seeking which we were to tread with inseparable feet of love!

But I told you I could not analyze that happiness which enchains me to life. Those are not its elements. It is not in pursuits or duties or enjoyments, but there is a real God ὁ δ' ἔσχε, μέμηνεν.

Ah, it eludes us like a mirage!

> But all these things are so,
> And all the world is bitter as a tear!

I do not write these despondent lines be-

cause of any special, or new, cause of despair. I am even slightly better, or at least easier. But certainly the disease is stubborn. I get but little sleep at night by reason of coughing, and have so little strength and energy by day that a short walk exhausts me. For reading and writing I have lost every inclination. What this climate will do for me I have not yet seen, but I begin to despair.

I fear, Katherine, you do not say how ill you are. Trouble and care wear upon you terribly, just as you revive with great freshness and vigor under the stimulants of joy and hope. Unhappy I that cause you pain!

As always and ever yours

BOULDER
28 AUGUST

In many of my letters, dear Katherine, written under the discouragement of pain and depression, I have no heart to try to tell you the untellable things that love continually prompts to say, and I write you little, meagre notes about my sufferings. Oh, how great

and patient your love is that makes so much of the feeble words of tenderness that my poor letters sometimes convey! If *they* "come like refreshing breezes from the west," imagine the storm of imprisoned emotions from which they proceed.

If it were not for you, darling, I know that all the misery of these months would have utterly destroyed my susceptibility to everything sweet and joyful and beautiful. But the simple thought of you refreshes and restores me. When nothing else will stimulate my exhausted and nerveless sense from its torpor, your name, or some token of you, will awaken the nameless ecstasy which dazed me for more than a week together one spring we remember.

And, oh, how I gloat over your dear letters and their precious assurance of love. But it is so vain! so vain! — to try to unburden my poor heart on paper. It aches more and more at the thought of its unattainable happiness.

I am glad to tell you that I have walked

two miles and ridden on horseback as many as eight without great fatigue. But the cough remains, especially at night.

You must not let my condition interfere with your journeying, Katherine dear. You need the relief change of scene gives, and we can manage not to be wholly without news of each other. Then I feel very hopeful of being better. This is my twenty-seventh birthday. It seems a long time since I was born.

BOULDER
11 SEPTEMBER

When I have gained sufficient strength to write, dearest, I scarcely have sufficient courage to tell you that I have had a backset, and improvement is, at least for the time, checked.

It seems that to you I am under obligations to get well, that I must not fail. No one else has such interest in my health. I know how patient and hopeful you are, and yet it will not relieve me from an almost apprehensive sense of responsibility. How fool-

ish I am, you will say. And so I am — but when was ever Love altogether wise?

I seem to have recovered my usual strength — that is, now usual — but the last ten days I have suffered extremely. Every afternoon a storm has risen back of us in the mountains, and if the rain did not as frequently reach us, we had its atmospheric conditions. Doubtless this has aggravated the malady.

You will soon start journeying, my high-heart, and in your faring you must not neglect me. A letter will reach me from any place in the country as well as from Lawrence.

How can you speak of my "shunning" you, Katherine, even in fun — is it that the poor child tries to make fun to conceal the aching heart? You know the only reason that I did not visit you was that I was in no fit condition to be guest at any house. Perhaps you do not know how dreadfully depressing this illness is, and how one suffering it has not enjoyment of a single faculty, or of a single feeling. I do not purpose to return

to Lawrence till I am greatly improved — if that may ever be — and then you shall see how carefully I shun you.

BOULDER
12 OCTOBER

You will have been disappointed, Katherine, at not finding a letter awaiting your return. But you must know that other folks make excursions too. While you were flitting from town to town I was on a camping trip to Manitou and The Garden of the Gods. I read your letters from Boston and Philadelphia for the first time yesterday. I do not know but only fancy you are at home, and I do hope the trip was helpful to my darling, high-hearted girl.

A camping tour of two hundred miles was certainly good for me. The cough had kept me in bed the greater part of days. Weather was unsettled and I had taken cold. But jolting along in a covered wagon and sleeping in a tent afforded great relief from the suffocation.

Season for campers is getting late, still I must go again this year. And next spring — if I live till then — I must fit myself for a long campaign.

Would not your mother, or your father, or the lately wedded pair come and spend next summer with you in sight of the noble mountain parks? We might then be together. How much that would do for me, who can tell? Certainly it is the only thing that still has power to make me wish to live. To live is to be with you. That is the last great unsubmerged highland of my life's desires.

Another time a better letter.

BOULDER
6 NOVEMBER

You have long expected these lines, dear Katherine. I have long been unable to write them, and at last I almost feel like taking refuge in some friendly hand to do it for me.

But no — we have lived in the face of a great calamity, and when it is time to take any resolution in regard to it, we must do it together.

I have been very sick. I can not give you any idea of what I suffered, and now I am just able to be up a few hours in the twenty-four. My power of recovery I no longer believe in. I have gained nothing with the exception of the temporary stimulus from a new climate — the disease has gone steadily on.

Katherine dear, it is not wise for us to entertain further hopes. I can not bear that you should go on in any illusion which must soon be dispelled. I write dispassionately because all passion of words is less than the things I feel. Were I even to live a few years of the invalidism they call recovery, I should not be myself.

My vigor of mind, as well as of body, has been permanently injured. I have been brought to renounce all hopes of life because a dim and fluctuating hope is far greater torture to me than utter resignation.

I can advise nothing. My heart aches for myself and feels unutterable depression for you that I have made thus unhappy.

I must leave it all to you, as I leave life to you. I am too feeble to feel much save one thing — a love that is my poor life, and yet far greater.

BOULDER
17 NOVEMBER

My Katherine, your letter overwhelms me with a flood of emotion. I have thought of nothing else for two days but the great, sweet soul revealed in those high-hearted lines — how it is the very fulfillment of my dream and ideals — what I dared not ever hope to see.

Oh, Kate, you say I seem to want to put you from me and that I have misread you. In this, dear, you misread me, save in the opinion that I have not always had a faith equal to the strength of your truth. But would it not be great presumption for one to imagine himself loved with that divine strength and perfect passion which only the sad fortune of our lives enables you to prove so soon?

I have always made it a rule to expect of

others as little as possible, and not to embarrass anyone by taking him for a saint or a hero. And dear, if I have not been willing to exact of you all your great heart stands ready to give, will you not forgive me?

But I do feel that it is best for us to look upon the darkest side of our fortune as the one fate has turned to us. It distresses me beyond measure to think that you have the bitter fact still to accept. I can not get ready to die till you have accepted it, and till I know that you have the wisdom and strength to do what is wisest and best.

It would be, as you say, much easier to die than to live on, the ruined half of a broken life, were it not for this very bitter thought in death — that we leave one whom we love better than life to the lonely years of a companionless existence. But after all it is perhaps the easier lot to die.

I do not suffer a great deal now but am very weak and seldom out of bed. The exertion of writing this has quite fatigued me,

and I must defer much I would say to another time. Write often

Your BYRON

BOULDER
13 DECEMBER

You never had a feebler correspondent, dear Katherine, than he who forces himself to scrawl these words. For two weeks I have been confined to bed with influenza, and I am incredibly weak from suffering and confinement.

It is wrong for you, darling, to distress yourself because of your inability to do for me. There is little that all the world could do if it were leagued to help me, and it is not a little after all that you do who are my great reason for caring at all to live.

We have been having a long cold spell here with abundant ice and snow for the sports. It is hard on me, and I feel that the winter and I have embraced for mortal combat. Which will see the other go out I can

only conjecture. If I live till warm weather, I shall have a new chance.

Oh, how much I should like to say a thousand things that rise inchoate in my weak spirit and, like the feeble shades in Virgil, will never rise *clara in luminis ora.* My heart is full of love and pity whenever your dear image comes before me. But I feel stricken dumb and all speech seems vain.

Keep up courage, Katherine dearest — I do not say hope, but courage. I feel that your own health is in great danger from your painful anxiety. Spare your own health and live — for while you live my better part defies the gloom of Orcus.

BOULDER
NEW YEAR'S DAY

My anxiety to hear from you, dearest, urges me to endeavor a letter. Oh, how weary I am of reporting to you one unfavorable turn after another! A dull attack of the old neuralgia and a fresh cold have greatly aggravated the cough.

The New Year opens with a bright, cold morning over a world of snow. It does not, however, seem like a New Year to me, but some old worn-out year, lived through ages ago, whose weary paths I must enter upon again. Where are the high and hopeful resolutions of other New Years! — impelling tasks to be finished before the end! — dazzling visions of great things to be achieved in the long perspective of future years! The very faculty of hope with the power to resolve, and all interest in life-tasks, seem to have left me forever. I hardly retain my identity.

Your letters abate no jot of their hopeful tone. May fate some day grant me power to reward your loving trust! The miseries of years would be forgotten in one short season of such tranquil joy as love can fill our lives with.

How easy it would be for those deaf powers of heaven to cure the wrongs of the past, when they have Love to help! Still patience and resignation are our only stays. I wait

for the warm airs of spring as the wrecked mariner looks for the rescuing sail. The question is — can I live till then?

I write under the painful apprehension that this letter may find you sick and unable to welcome this poor New Year's greeting. How poor a thing is a letter! One hand-clasp, one kiss were worth a thousand of them.

Ever and always your
BYRON

BOULDER
16 JANUARY

By this time, dearest Katherine, you are wanting to know how I fare. Well, I get up every day notwithstanding there is no let-up in distressing weather. Snow has covered the ground since the first of December, and last night we had a fresh fall and freeze-up.

I have opportunity to secure the managing editorship of a newspaper in one of the nearby towns. If my health only permitted me to undertake the duties! — which of

course it does not. I think I might discharge the merely editorial labor. But even to do that I must make a gain of strength with the spring.

How happy I should be if it were to turn out as I wish! Then we might renew our old drives, but this time through The Garden of the Gods and the glens of Manitou. Could you come to stay somewhere in my neighborhood next summer? You know I can not reach the fulfillment of our great desire of being together — but we might at least be near each other.

I know you have no idea of the change illness has made in my person. How would you relish a cadaverous and feeble lover? — a lover with bronchitic tones and not energy sufficient to respond to your most moderate exactions? Have you realized such conditions as actually mine? — or would they strike you with most painful surprise? It seems, you say, that your place is with me under all circumstances, and surely I can not defend an opposite opinion. But then

we should be freed from the constant presence of, and daily dependence upon, strangers.

I have not more patience than there is real need of. Heaven knows how that is. What can we do? You make a suggestion. With life itself in a most uncertain balance, we are bold, it seems to me, to plan at all. I fear you distress and rack your dear head with schemes to effect the impossible. You are so often ill of late, I fear this unhappiness is wearing you out. Tell me truly, is it mental trouble and worry that so sap your health? Oh, what shall I do if your spirit fails you and I can not help you! Spare me this.

BOULDER
18 JANUARY

Your short letter referring to Bancroft's death came a few hours ago.

Ill again, and as ever from some mental agitation is its painful preface. How earnestly I pray that this heartfelt loss of a friend may at least release you from the almost ever-present, haunting thought which

your distracted heart fed with its best blood.

In those months, long ago, I was not unaware in any important particular of the turmoil in that dear breast, which often rendered it insensible to my presence. But I hoped that in the end it would grow calm with no mingled image glowing in its depths. Then, too, how could I blame you when I had acted with such indiscretion as to claim you in the very agonies of the old attachment? Your love for Bancroft did not prove what both had hoped. Still, I had no right for that reason so totally to disregard it, to count it as nothing from the moment I felt some assurance that your inmost heart was mine.

But we are happy in the terrible experiences of the last two years, for with all else it has ground to dust it has not spared the doubts and involuntary misgivings of those earliest days. My only anxiety now is that you should forever dismiss from your soul the last wretched reproaches. If turned from there no other heart will shelter them

and they will perish. Rely upon my perfect love, my perfect confidence, nay, more, my pride in the unequalled devotion and constancy with which I am so blessed as to be loved.

When last I saw the dear boy in Philadelphia he was the very image of manly vigor and health. I little dreamed he would precede me along the dusty way that lights us to the grave.

I still hold my own in the midst of bad weather.

Yours forever

BOULDER
11 FEBRUARY

To-day I am strong enough to sit up and write a few lines to you, dearest Katherine. For nearly two weeks I have been prostrate with a great aggravation of illness. It is the worst attack I have had and has brought me nearer the end. Unless my strength reacts soon I have but a short time to live — perhaps three or four weeks. Nor can I look

upon an escape from this attack as anything but a short reprieve of an inevitable sentence.

To-day may be a turning-point. I can not say — this disease is so treacherous. I have done with hope, however, and will not again be lifted up only to be dashed into an abyss.

If the end is really near, shall I see you? I do not try to write what can not be written, what I feel at this moment with your image in my heart.

BOULDER
23 FEBRUARY

Still in bed, Katherine dear, unable from weakness and the inconveniences of illness to be about.

Two unanswered letters from your dear hand lie beside me on my pillow. They are very brief and seem to bear evidence of a soul in unutterable misery. Oh, I could destroy myself out of grief when I think it is I who have brought you to this. Is it not madness for a frail mortal, subject to such scorns and cruelties of nature, to dare to invite an-

other to partake of the nectar of love, a draught only for the happy gods? — a madness that multiplies our miseries a thousand fold.

Death has lost all its terrors for me save one, and that is because my dearer self is yet beyond all assuaging and calming power of my spirit. I can answer for my poor self, but how can I, how dare I die for you?

I have sent for mother to come, both in view of the danger of a speedy close, and, in other event, for the sake of her presence. The weather is fair at present, but we have to look for a blustering and changeable spring, unfavorable to sick lungs.

Now my Light, if your continued ill health is the result of mental anxiety, without any important contributing physical cause, what are we to think but that your nature is far too frail and sensitive for the serious responsibilities of life? I know what cause and excuse you have for excessive sorrowing, but I would rather know that you were squarely sick of something time might cure than that

all this distress were the soul's oppression under the cross of life.

Write me, darling, more about yourself — what you do and what you think of besides this poor, unworthy invalid, the equal thrall of Love and Death.

BOULDER
8 MARCH

If my unsteady hand finishes this page, Katherine, my treasure, it will be all I can hope. My condition is worse only in that I suffer more. We are having a great snow storm. You must not stop your blessed letters to me, darling, because I can not answer them. I have no other correspondent now to whom I write αὐτογραφικῶς.

My dreams of you grow more and more vivid, and I have lived through many a lovely season by your side absorbed in the tenderest and noblest delights of life.

But my hand sinks and my feeble hours are few.

God be with you, Light and Life.

BYRON